



*"We don't stop laughing because we grow old,
we grow old because we stop laughing."*

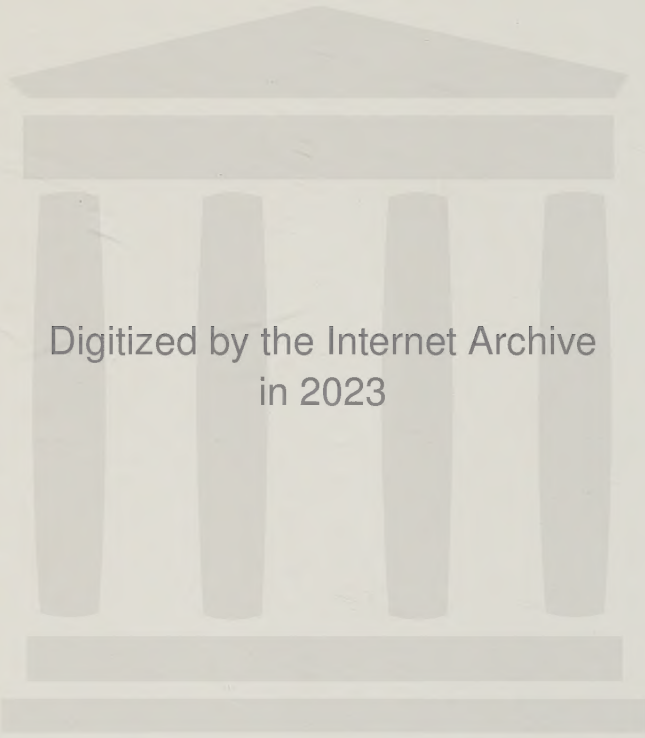
LAFF

IT

OFF!

Foreword by
**Jerry
Seinfeld**

by **GEORGE WALLACE**
with **DAN EWEN**



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— **IT** —

OFF!

by **George Wallace**
with **Dan Ewen**

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Acknowledgments

THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE I COULD THANK FOR
MAKING THIS BOOK POSSIBLE.

I should start with my dear manager and friend, “What’s His Name”. He’s actually been pushing me to do this for the past eight years. What’s His Name said to me, “Mr. Wallace, when are you going to share your experience with the world? You’re a story to tell!” What’s His Name was right. This book is only a tenth of the life lessons I’ve learned. Oh, and What’s His Name is Christopher Pratt, a manager you can trust. I think.

I also want to dedicate this book to my family, and to Lynwood Park, a small community in the A-T-L. Some call it Atlanta. Thanks to Mary Lou and Deacon Wallace. I didn’t know his real name until I went off to college. He signed the tuition check.

I dedicate this to my siblings, George Jr. (June), Jessie, Johnny, Napoleon, Eddie and Jerome, the best family in the whole wide world. Also to my four kids, Chuck, Sherry, Lori and Phoebe,

for always being there for me.

I have to thank my schoolteachers, and my great pastor and friend, Bishop Charles E. Blake. What a wonderful leader. Thank you Joel Osteen, for your inspiration, and Les Brown for teaching us to live our dreams. I want my co-writer, Dan Ewen, to know how much I appreciate his words and thoughts. He has been a blessing to my life since meeting him last week.

Eternal thanks to Arsenio Hall, Oprah, Jay Leno, David Letterman, Tom Joyner, Steve Harvey, Rickey Smiley, Jeanne Sparrow and all my media friends for putting the name George Wallace on the map.

Most of all I'd like to dedicate this book to my best friend ever, the man God gave me as a confidant and financial cushion. If I need it, he has it. That's what he said. One day I'll take him up on his offer. If there's one great man I've met in my 37 years of comedy, Jerry Seinfeld is that man. I truly wish everyone had a best friend like "Jerome". Oh yeah, he's Jerry to you, but "Jew-rome" to me. Everybody else is afraid of him. Not me. He's my baby brother and my "Mr. Know It All". I'll never stop loving you, friend. Thank you, Jerome.

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FOREWORD

I MET GEORGE WALLACE IN JUNE, 1976 AT A NIGHT-CLUB CALLED "CATCH A RISING STAR" ON THE UPPER EAST SIDE OF MANHATTAN.

23 years later he was the Best Man at my Wedding. What the hell happened?! I swear to god, I don't know.

How did I get stuck with this person?!

We have been best friends now for 37 years! And for what? I don't like him. I've never liked him. I think the only thing we have in common is we both like me.

Actually, we both love me. He and I have been in love with me since the day we met. We talk about me, admire me. We frankly cannot get over me.

Well, let me back up and start at the beginning because I don't even really know what this guy's name is.

I call him 'Henry' because he told me that's his real name. I think 'George' is his middle name.

So, when we started out to be stand up comedians in the 70's the idea of a big, black guy with the same name as the racist Governor of Alabama was kind of funny.

And it was... then. But now it's meaningless, because nobody remembers that guy and dumb ass Wallace is using a phony name for 40 years because it got three mediocre laughs in 1977.

But it does give you some idea of how much George loves to be funny and the lengths he would go to make people laugh.

And that really is the real reason we have been best friends all this time. You might say, "But don't all comedians want to make people laugh?"

Well, yes they do. But as you know, people can sometimes be doing the exact same thing but for completely different reasons.

Mr. Wallace and I have always both looked at this strange profession the same way and that has always been a big part of our bond.

We both just love it for the sake of it and really don't give much of a damn about anything else.

We just want to make jokes, see people laugh and make them happy. Now, please understand, comedy is also a business and you have to approach it that way.

I decided to approach it by being hugely successful and making a ton a money.

Mr. Wallace chose a different path. But that's okay, I still love him like a brother and always will.

I also feel completely free to say anything I want in this Foreword because really, who's buying this Vegas walkout souvenir crapola anyway?

You are. And you know what? I read this stupid thing, and it's really not bad. There's a lot of laughs in it.

And it gives you a great feeling of hanging around with George Wallace. Which I'm telling you, based on a lot of years of real life experience, is one of the best feelings you can have in this world.

So let me encourage you to do like I've done. If you're feeling a little off as we all do once in a while, get yourself some Wallace.

In person, video, printed page or what not. He really is one of the most beautiful people I've ever met and I love him to death.

Whoever the hell he is.

Jerry Seinfeld
New York City

CHAPTER

1

IF YOU'RE READING THIS, I ALREADY GOT YOUR
DAMNED MONEY.

Suckers!

You done messed up now, folks. I am counting your money right now, laughing like crazy. This is the real "For Dummies" book, dummy. I cut and pasted the dictionary into here and slapped my picture on the cover. Now, if you need me, I'll be somewhere in South America, laying in a hammock and sipping liquid gold.

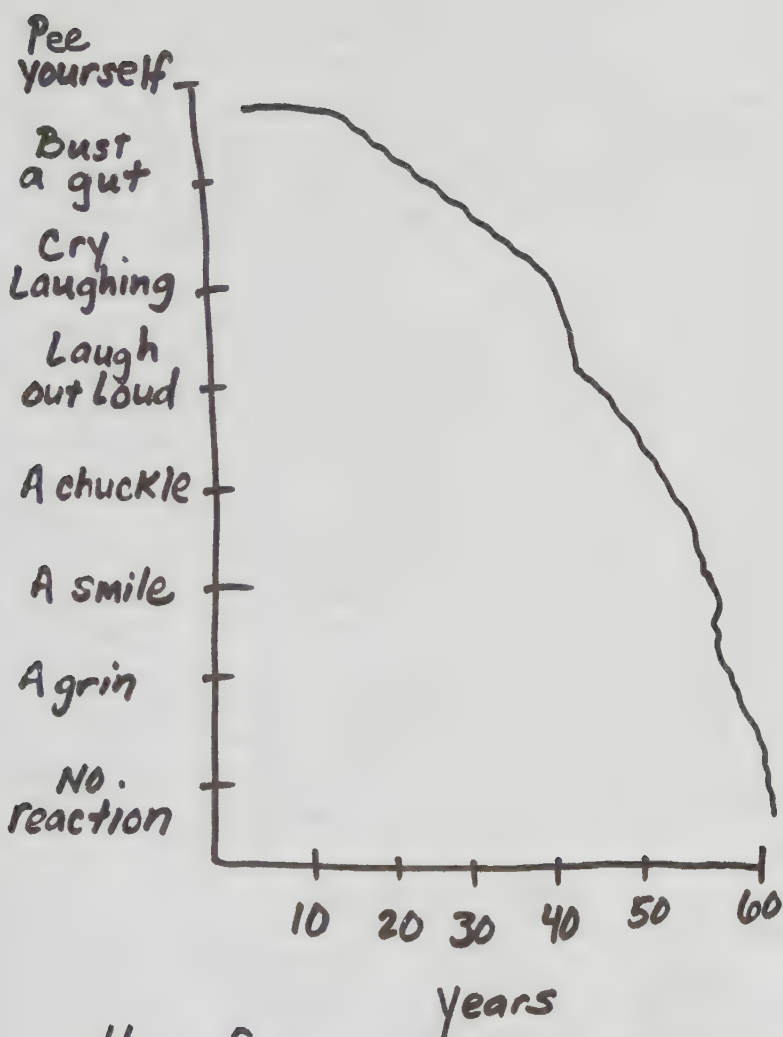
All right, fine. I'll give y'all an actual book, but only 'cause my lawyers told me to.

Did you know that children laugh 400 times a day? Think about that. Four hundred times. They're asleep for ten of those hours. Unless they're having some funny-as-hell dreams, that's one laugh every two minutes. How many of you come within a mile of those numbers?

Yep, adults manage only fifteen laughs. Why is this happening? Are there fewer funny things happening these days? Not as many banana peels lying around? Shortage of whoopee cushions? Did the chicken stop crossing the road? Run out of "yo' mama" jokes? I sure haven't.

The worst part of this is that laughter can help keep you young. Studies have proven that laughter is truly the best medicine, useful in treating dozens of illnesses. Humor has been documented as a key component in recovery and healing. You remember Patch Adams? God, that movie was awful. So bad it made me laugh, which in turn made me healthier. See how that worked?

More than ever it appears that we don't stop laughing because we grow old—we grow old because we stop laughing.

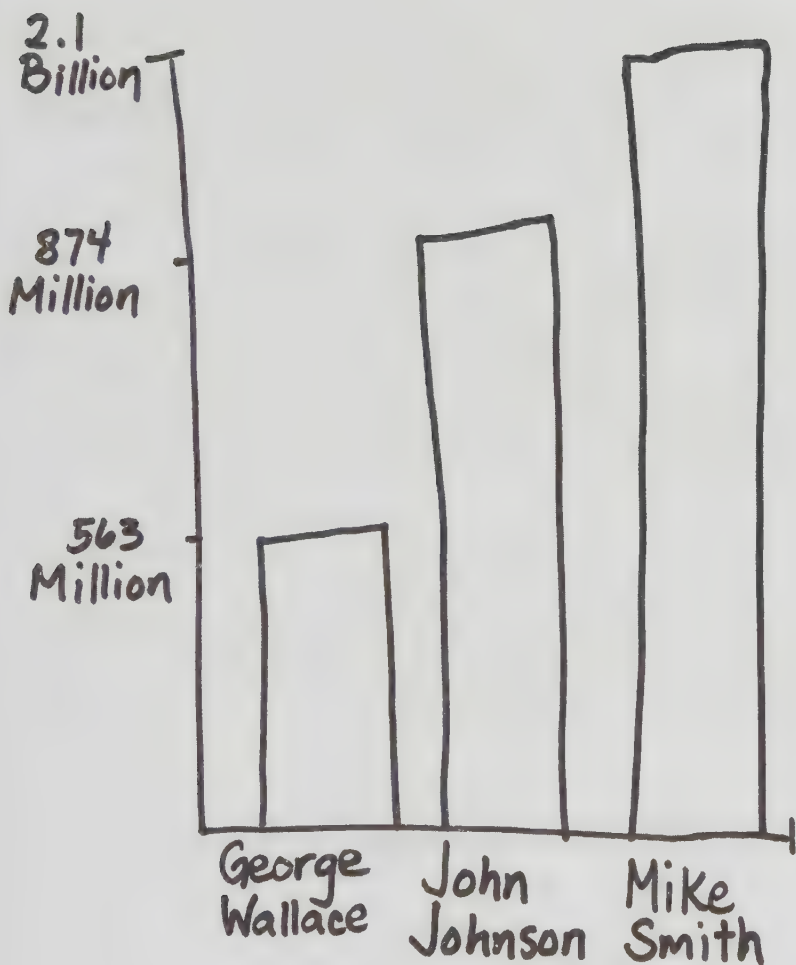


How funny we think someone
getting hit in the groin is as
we age

Some people say that the stress of the “real world” is what stops the laughter from coming. When you grow up there are bills to pay. You’ve got to work a nine-to-five. You’ve got relationship troubles. But come on, people, you don’t think a kid deals with stuff too? There’s a bully on the playground, a math test the next day. Their teeth are falling out of their heads. Parents are yelling at ’em to eat their broccoli. Kids have their own problems, but they still find a way to laugh their pint-sized behinds off.

So why can’t the adults have some fun? Does it all have to be so darned serious? Why can’t we find the laughter in our lives? I believe we can. I believe it’s possible to paint every aspect of our lives with enough humor to get us through. Life is a funny thing. We’re all spinning through space on this big old rock, watching Judge Judy and teaching parrots to sing “Happy Birthday.” People are funny. Life is funny. No reason to walk around with a long face. There’s laughter to be found in every moment of every day.

So just who am I to tell you to cheer up? Well, good question. For the record, this is who I am. I served as the forty-fifth governor of Alabama. In 1972 I was shot in an assassination attempt. Wait, why don’t I remember any of this? Hold on . . .



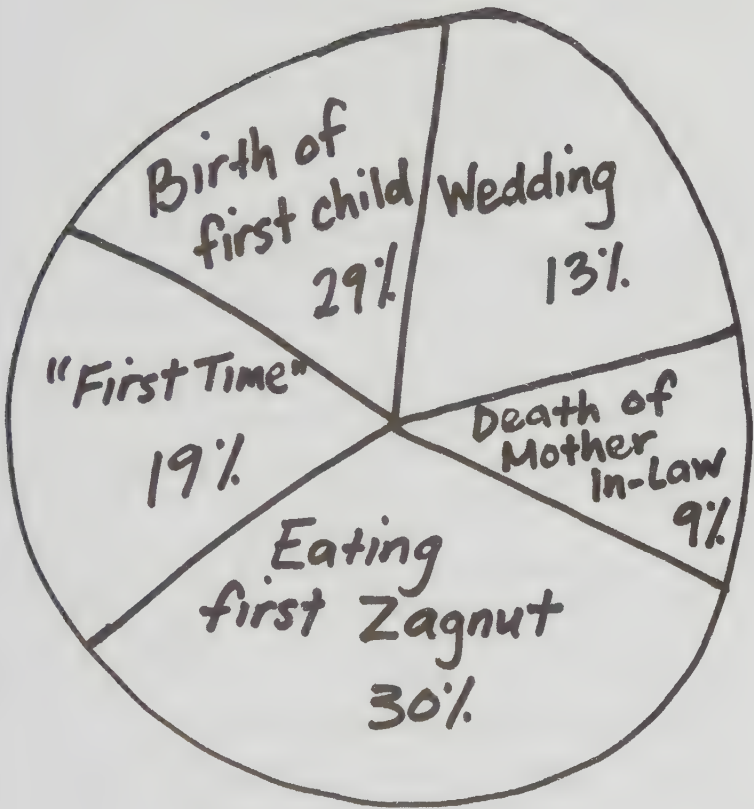
Most Common names
in the world

Okay, my lawyers are saying that I can't use Wikipedia to tell you about my life. First they tell me I have to write a book, then they tell me I can't "borrow" any of it from the Internet?

I was born in Atlanta, Georgia. My mama delivered me herself after my daddy fainted. She wrapped me in swaddling clothes and spoon-fed me food from Dairy Queen. I have to tell you, I came out of the womb telling jokes. They knocked on my mama's belly— "Five minutes, Mr. Wallace."

Everyone in my family played football. I played one time and one time only. Stepped on that field, got clotheslined by a monster named Sam Colbert, and hung up my cleats in about five minutes flat. I decided to tell jokes instead. Fewer broken bones when you're getting hit by tomatoes and not linebackers. So I became the funnyman of the family. My folks were great, they raised me right, and they were both gone by the time I was seventeen.

Now, I'm not asking for a pity party, unless y'all will bring Zagnuts. 'Cause I'll throw a pity party if it'll get me some of those. Seriously, is there a more underrated candy bar? And no, Zagnut isn't paying me to write this. Not yet, anyway. Hey, Zagnut people, call me! Hold on . . .



Greatest Moment
of
Our Lives
(1,000 People Polled)

Okay, my manager is telling me not to go on about how great Zagnuts are until I've actually secured an endorsement deal with them. So, in the future, when you see me going on and on about Zagnuts and how the coconut and peanut butter interacts so beautifully and how I can't get enough of them, you'll know they came calling with a nice check and a lifetime supply.

Where was I again? Oh, yeah, the saddest time of my life. See how that happened? See where my mind went? Call it a sickness or a blessing, but my brain searches for the lighter side. It's not just because that's how I make my living. I've been that way as long as I can remember. Through thick and thin I have laughed it off, and it's done wonders in my life. I hope you folks find some value in this message. If it happened for me, it can happen for you.

So, my parents were great folks who left this world too soon. No doubt, that was a tough time. I had been dealt a hand that was worse than a lot of folks, but still better than some. I proceeded with a belief in better times ahead and faith that the man upstairs would take care of me.

I ended up going to Ohio to live with one of my sisters and her family, freezing my behind off. Why do people live in these places? Icicles hanging from your nose. We called 'em "snotcicles." You got to ride a sled to work and hire a Sherpa to help you get home. Nowadays it's even worse. Kids have their pants hanging below their behinds, the wind chill's about ten below zero. Maybe the Red Cross can airlift some belts up there?

At any rate, you know how siblings are. It didn't work out too well with my sister. This is where the Hill family came in. I met them through church. They had a little space in the attic,

and they took me in. Right off the bat I was accepted as one of their own. I had been blessed with a surrogate family better than I could have ever imagined.

From there it was a job at the Firestone Tire Company. I already looked like the Michelin Man with a serious tan, so that job made sense for me. The company had a deal where they helped pay for college. Enter the University of Akron and a double major in transportation and advertising and marketing. We were the Akron Zips. I learned pretty quickly that meant Ohio State 34, Akron zip.

Going to college also helped me keep a roof over my head as a young man. I started as a commuter, but those dorms looked pretty good to me. I sweet-talked my way into a gig as a resident assistant. Now, the rules were that you had to be a junior to be an RA. Let's just say that if I lived my life by the rules every time I wouldn't be anywhere near where I am today. So I shook the right hands, made the right folks laugh, and convinced them I would do the job well. I remain the only freshman RA in school history. I ran a tight ship. We talked a lot of smack and had a lot of fun, but when I said, "Jump," the kids on my floor asked, "How high?" The school treated me well.

But you know the amazing thing about Akron? Nothing. I took my degree and got the hell out, like LeBron James. I had to take my talents to The Big Apple. But seriously, the people of Akron are good folks. That's why I go back to visit every twelve or thirteen years.

I know what you're thinking: that advertising and transportation double major qualified me to do one thing—sell ads on buses. Well, don't you know that's exactly what I ended up doing? When I first moved to New York, I sold rags for a little

while. I was the ShamWow! guy thirty years early. I swear those were ShamWow!s I was selling. Same exact thing. Have you bought a ShamWow!? First time you try and mop up a spill,

“Wow, what a sham!”

Sales suited me just fine. I got to meet people and make 'em laugh. Those were my two favorite things to do from the moment I could talk. I had no idea that I would be able to do exactly that for the rest of my life, on stage.

When I stopped selling rags I started selling ads on the buses. I was darned good at it, and I made my way up the ranks pretty quickly. Still, it wasn't exactly my passion, and along came one of those moments we all need to be on the lookout for. An ad client of mine told me he was opening a comedy club on Second Avenue called The Comic Strip. He'd always found me at least somewhat amusing, so he invited me down to an open mic night.

People, when someone asks you to something like this, accept their invitation. Sure, you might end up sitting in a timeshare presentation or being kidnapped by Somalian pirates, but nothing ventured, nothing gained. I'll give you much more on this topic later (an entire chapter, in fact), but stepping out of your comfort zone is almost always a positive thing.

*Top 5 things I could
have done that night instead:*

- 5. Written an angry letter
to Richard Nixon*
- 4. Organized my 8-track
collection*
- 3. 42nd Street Peepshow*
- 2. Refilled my bean bag chair*
- 1. Stood in line at Studio 54 in
the freezing cold like an idiot*

So, when asked, I dutifully reported to said open mic night. I stepped up there on a Thursday in front of a crowd of seven people, three of them homeless folks just trying to get out of the rain. I had a character I'd been kicking around, the Reverend George Wallace. I got up there in a robe, carrying a phone book (aka "The Good Book of Bell"). I started talking, and lo and behold, a good bit of laughter ensued. I've been holding a microphone ever since.

I decided to dive in and try to actually make a living at comedy. I started doing stand-up at a few different clubs in New York. The comedians helped each other out. We bonded. Every morning we'd all go to a place called The Green Kitchen. People would work on jokes, and we would help each other find gigs around the city. We truly cared about one another. Our social medium was breakfast.

A fellow funnyman and I became roommates. Actually, I was so much funnier than him that it was sad. I'm not sure what happened to that guy. Jerry . . . Seinberg or something? Seinblatt? Rosenfeld? I can't remember. I think he did a little bit of television. At any rate, we were best friends for a long time. Though he constantly calls me for money, I respect our mutual past and refuse to cut him loose.

I moved to Los Angeles in 1978 with Jerry Steinberg (pretty sure that was his name) to dive into a little TV stuff. The Tonight Show, Letterman, Donahue, Merv Griffin, even Oprah had me on. That was like meeting the pope. You go to the Oprah Winfrey Show, you've got to rub oils on her feet and speak to her in the third person. She's crazy. No, I can't lie to you. Oprah is one of the most positive people I know. You see how it's served her? You ever hear Oprah Winfrey say, "Nah, I can't do that"?

She's got it right. Early on in my life I took words like "can't" and "impossible" out of my vocabulary. You say those words enough, they start governing your possibilities. And I promise you, the possibilities are endless when you believe they are.

The 5 times it's okay to say the word "CAN'T"

1. "No, I can't walk your pet tiger."
2. "I can't accept that candy, Stranger."
3. "I can't talk now, but thanks for this copy of 'The Watchtower' magazine."
2. "I can't believe how good these Nutter Butters are."
1. "I can't wait to give George Wallace my money."

You go into something saying it's impossible, you'll fail. Worse still, if you think something's impossible, you probably won't even try in the first place. These are little things we say and believe that end up having massive impacts on our lives. Don't surround yourselves with people married to those words. 'Cause they'll tell you it's impossible. They'll tell you that you can't. Is that what friends are for? What if I told Jerry Seinfeld it would be impossible to own 14,000 Porsches? If I said that enough times, he might have believed me, and he never would have made it to more than 300, maybe 400 of 'em.

Let me tell you something. Stop doubting yourself and letting others doubt you. When people told me I couldn't do something, I tell you, I laughed it off and kept on walking. All my life. I've been up in front of too many audiences to count. I've been on the big screen and that small one in your living room. I've been from one end of this earth to the other, doing what I love. I am the most blessed person in the world. People say you can't? You can. It's possible. With the man upstairs all things are possible.

Laughing it off has served me at every step along the way. What follows is my best shot at convincing y'all to move forward the same way. Like my best friend Les Brown says, "Live your dreams."

I've tried to cover it all in this little ditty, from the cradle to the pearly gates. So grab this book and relax by the pool. Take it on your business trip. Put it next to your toilet; I don't mind. Just don't flush it.

You'll live longer, you'll live happier, you'll walk taller. Oh, and you'll be much less likely to hit people with blunt objects.

CHAPTER

2

SON, THIS IS YOUR BURIAL PLOT. YOU CAN USE IT NOW, OR YOU CAN USE IT LATER.

You got any kids yet? If you don't, you probably will. And if you never did, like yours truly, you dodged a bullet. Procreation is a mess. It may feel good to start with, especially the first seven and a half minutes of the process, but it's all downhill from there. Babies to toddlers. Toddlers to dirty little kids. Kids to disobedient teenagers. Teenagers to adults who start making their own. It's the circle of yuck. Makes my skin crawl.

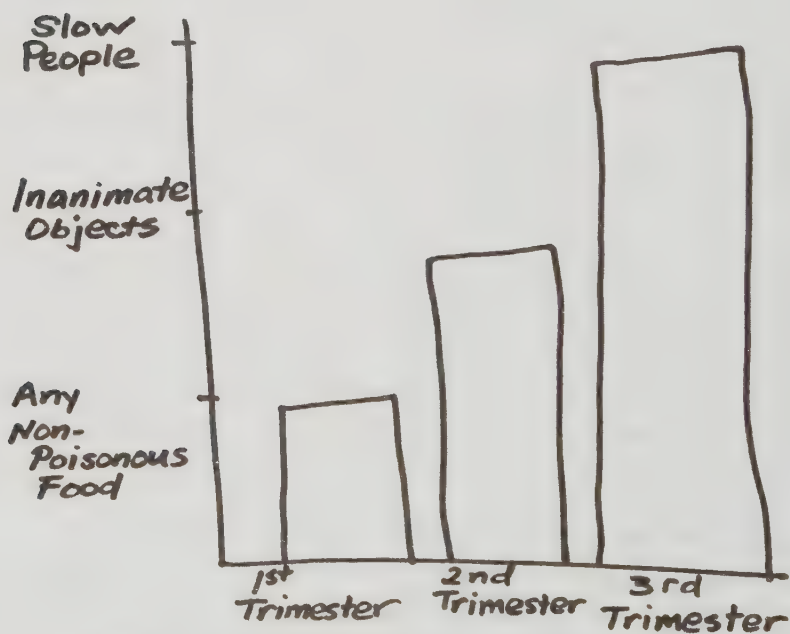
Why are you people always showing us pictures of your ugly-ass kids? Every time I turn around, someone's running up to me in a restaurant with his wallet out, or his cell phone. "Take a look at my baby." The kid has a snaggletooth, eyes looking two different directions like a king salmon. But you've got to say the right thing anyway. "Look out! That kid's gonna be a heartbreaker." I got news for these people. That kid is

going to be a mirror breaker.

But I digress. I'm throwing around advice here, and reproducing seems to be a big part of life as we know it. So George will tell you a little bit about what he thinks he might know.

Part 1 - The Pregnant Person Gains about Eighty Pounds

It's all right, you're eating for two. What's my excuse? Maybe I've been pregnant for the last thirty years. Get your food on, girl. You deserve it. You've got a parasite living inside of you, and it won't stop sucking you dry till it turns twenty-one. If then.



*Things Women will
eat during Pregnancy*

Men, if your lady wants to eat roadkill at 3 a.m., you go out with a flashlight and a Hefty bag and find her some. She is carrying an entire other human being in her stomach that she will ultimately squeeze through an opening five sizes too small while fifty hospital employees yell at her. All you have to do is shove food in her face and rub her bloated feet once every few days. Believe me, you're getting the cherry end of this deal.

Part 2 – The Baby Shoots Out and Starts Crying

Don't panic. From what I understand, newborns cannot speak English yet. They cannot tell you what they want. They cannot explain to you that they've got a nasty-ass rash, or that they'd like to put their mouth on your hooter. They don't have those words. They just cry in new and horrific ways. I have compiled the following to help you out.

The George Wallace Baby Glossary

“Waaaah, wah, wah, waaaaah!” – Someone feed me.

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!” – I pooped myself.

“Weeeh. Waaah. Waaaaaaaaah. Waaaaah.” – I peed myself.

“Wah wah wah wah weeeh wah!” – Another toy, please.

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaah waaaaaaaaaaaaah!” – I am so sick of looking at this stupid mobile spinning.

So when they're yelling at you, don't panic. They can't talk yet, and we've long forgotten how to speak Babyese. They're not being eaten by a dingo or anything.*

** Note: George Wallace bears no responsibility if your child is in fact eaten by a dingo.*

General Baby Notes

Ladies, put your boobs in their mouths and the babies will grow. Don't let them sit in their own mess too long. Don't let them draw their own baths. Don't throw 'em.

Though having a baby (or multiple babies at once, for those of you who are especially cursed) can be stressful, it's nothing compared to what's about to happen.

Part 3 – The Kid Starts Walking and Tears Your House Apart

As if things weren't bad enough, these tiny creatures begin standing and walking. You're going to think it's cute and snap all kinds of pictures of 'em. But you won't be smiling for long. That child is about to break every possession you hold dear. He is also about to try to jam every possible object into your power outlets.

Two Ways to Keep Your Kid Safe

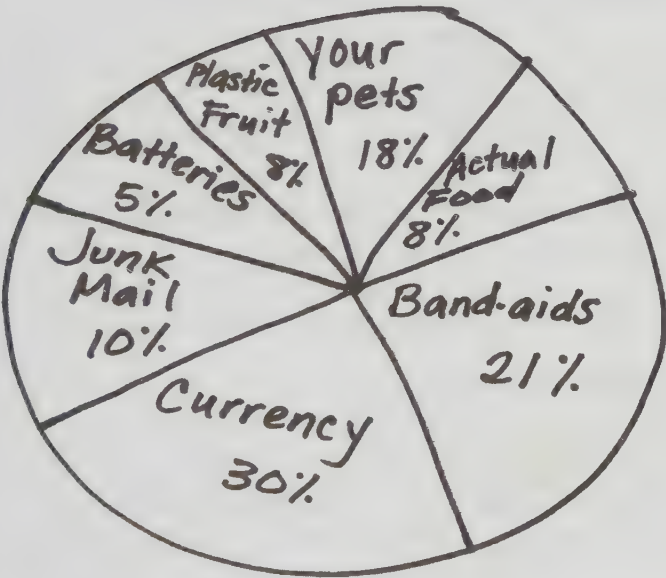
You have two choices at this point.

Choice A: Childproof Your Home – Put breakables away or out of reach. Put covers on all power outlets. Add cushioning to any sharp corners on your furniture. Apply safety gates to limit your child's exploration into more dangerous areas of the home.

Choice B: Homeproof Your Child – Tie child up; place on couch. Socks over hands to prevent grabbing and throwing. Loud music at all times to drown out crying.

Parents and law enforcement will almost always prefer choice A, but homeproofing your child has its advantages. It will prepare him for being in confined spaces like airplane seats. It will also make for much happier children during

those few moments a day (ten minutes every six hours) that you free them.



Things you'll find in
your toddler's mouth

General Toddler Notes

You will spend the next handful of years preparing them for school. Read some books to them. Brush their teeth once in awhile. Teach them that cars are heavy and that running in front of them can “give them big ouchies.” Before you know it, it’ll be time to let them fly on their own.

Take a Moment Before They Head Off to School

So, your kid is now five and whatnot. If your child is still in one piece, pat yourself on the back. You’ve taken him or her from helpless little squirming alien to reasonably cute human child. You have done all you can do to prepare him or her. Well, there’s one more thing you’ve got to do before dropping your child off at school for the first time.

Prepare Your Kid to Punch Someone in the Face

Elementary school is different these days, y’all. It’s like a little-kid correctional facility. You need to teach your kid how to land a right cross, right off the bat. Then you tell that kid, “The second you walk into the schoolyard, on your very first day, you find the biggest, baddest bully in sight and haul off and knock him the hell out.”

And no, I’m not kidding. That’s how you play it at San Quentin, and that’s exactly how your munchkin’s got to play it at Lynwood Park Elementary School. Today’s kids are dangerous. We’ve got kids shooting dogs for eating their homework. Your kid will be eaten alive if he doesn’t announce himself right off the bat. Crack! Knock that bully out! That will set the tone for the next sixteen years of your child’s life.

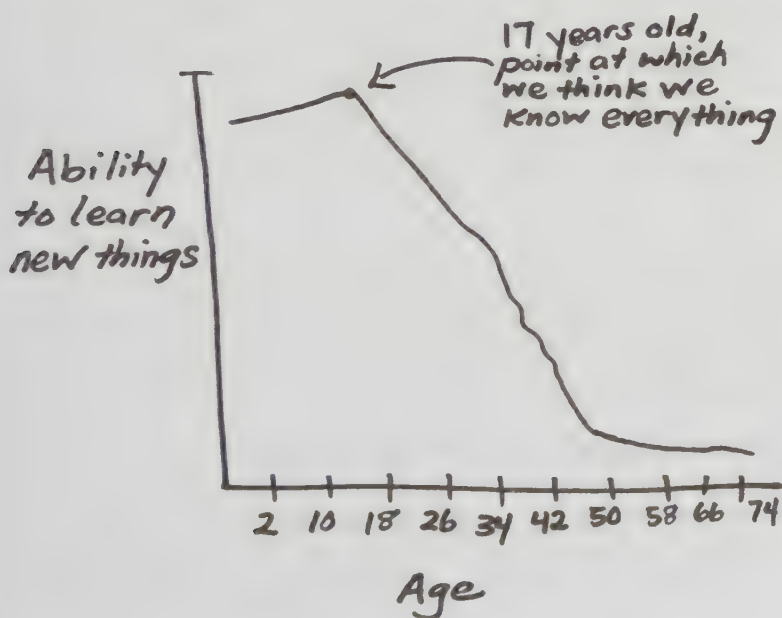
That school will call you up and tell you what happened, and you are going to act like it was completely out of the blue.

You show up and shake that kid by the shoulders. "I don't know what could have gotten into him." Then you put that kid in the car, high-five him all the way home and twice at bedtime.

Part 3 - The Kid Becomes Smarter than You

I don't care if you're a reasonably intelligent grown-up, you haven't been in school in a long time. Your third grader is going to start dropping some knowledge on you. World capitals, math problems you can't remember a damned thing about, names of bones and crap. This is the dreaded know-it-all phase.

Those days of "Why is the sky blue?" and "Where do babies come from?" are long gone. Hell, they know better than you do now. They can probably draw you a diagram. Or better yet, your nine-year-old will just make you one on his iPad.



Try not to get frustrated with them. Allow them to share their knowledge. Consider this your very own refresher course, like you yourself are redoing elementary school. You know some of y'all forgot how to do long division. I know I did. My accountant handles that. Allow these kids to talk your ears off. But don't ever, EVER allow them to talk back.

The Greatest Change in Kids Today

Baby Boomers, could we sass our folks and get away with it? In my house there'd be hell to pay. You know how people have their kids doing yoga nowadays? They think that's a new thing, but I promise you, my mama bent us every which way but loose. She would yank my legs like a wishbone, fold me in half, toss me around. I was a limber little boy on account of all that homemade yoga she cooked up for me. My mama would still be getting out of jail if child abuse was a crime back then.

My folks kept us in line. My daddy would just look at us, snap and point. Didn't have to say a solitary word. You would stop whatever you were doing with a quickness. And wherever he pointed after that snap, that was where you went. If he caught you jumping on the bed he could stop you in mid-air. And you'd stay up there till his finger brought you down.

When I talked back, my mama would drive me down to the cemetery. She'd say, "Junior, this here's your plot. You can use it now, or you can use it later. But you're not gonna talk back to me in my house." I've got to say, that drove the point home pretty well.

Occasionally Blow Their Minds with Magic

But aside from threatening their lives or shaking them for a half hour straight, there are things you can do to get your kids to respect you. Every last one of us has a handful of amazing

childhood memories etched in our brains. You create some of those for your kid, it'll go a long way.

If you see that your kid is frightened about a math test, surprise the hell out of them. Show up ten minutes before class and sign them out of school. They'll probably assume that you're just there to shake 'em. But you're actually going to take them to the movies. You wouldn't believe the impact something this simple will have on your relationship with your kid.

Part 4 – Your Relationship with Your Kid Falls Apart Anyway

One day your kid starts to get too big for his britches. Suddenly he's got leg hair and whatnot. About three hundred pimples take up permanent residence on his face. You will wonder what the hell happened to your baby. That's right—he's become a teenager.

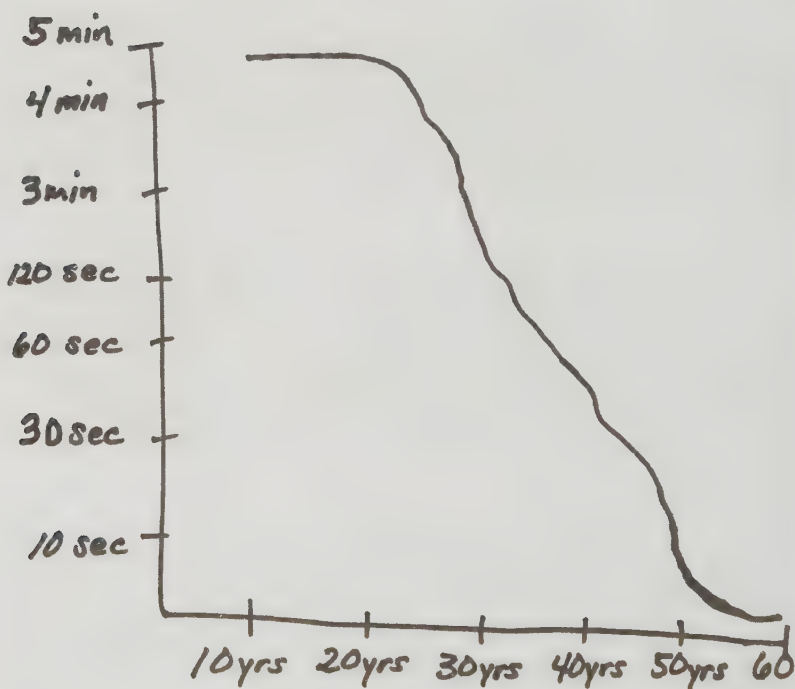
But all these changes you see on the outside? They pale in comparison to the madness going on inside of that poor kid. Take spirit-crushing insecurity and mix it with a desperate need to belong, horrific decision-making skills, and a complete inability to think about other people. That unending mess is what makes up your average teenager. They are crazy. Just. Plain. Crazy.

They start hiding out in their rooms. That's another thing that's changed. When we were kids we had our own rooms too, but there were four or five other kids in there with you. Youngsters today have their own rooms. They're locked in there, on the Internet, making bombs. The closest thing we had was an Etch-a-Sketch. But God bless these young people. Adolescence is a rough time, for them and you.

First and foremost, you won't be able to understand their

words. Technically they are trying to communicate with you, but you will be unable to decipher the sound waves they produce. "Nowutumsane?" Everything. "Boutta get dis chedda, nowutumsane, nowutumsane?" No, I have absolutely no idea what you're saying! It would help if you spoke English.

And what are these new handshakes kids are doing? I missed my plane shaking a young man's hand last week. It was about fifty moves long. Can we get this down to two or three so a brother can keep up?



Length of handshakes
as we grow older

These youngsters are not right. Grabbing their crotches all the time. When I was young you only grabbed your crotch if you were kicked there, and even that was just a reflex. And their pants are down to their knees. Really? You want to show me your nasty underwear that badly? There are a couple of positives here, though. The streets are cleaner from all of these dragging pants. Not to mention crime is down, 'cause these badass kids can't run away after they've robbed someone.

You will begin to barely recognize your children as their peers and pop culture take hold. Your beloved baby starts to look like something out of Jersey Shore, and you will lay awake at night staring at the ceiling. But always remember . . .

You spent over a decade forming this mound of clay.

They may go through phases. They're going to screw up here and there. It will seem like you're losing them. But you wiped their noses, you dried their tears, you tied them to the couch for their own safety. If you give them a little bit of freedom, they will come back to you.

Princess Leia once said to Darth Vader, "The more you tighten your grip, the more star systems will slip through your fingers." Now, that's some serious wisdom between those Afro puffs hanging off the side of her head. Teenagers are like star systems. Your job is to maintain some order in the galaxy without becoming Darth Vader and losing them.

Let these kids go out, but make them check in. Give them a little walking-around money, but make them do a few chores for it. They're getting good grades? Let 'em borrow that car for a dinner with friends. There's a balance. Give 'em enough slack and you won't get the "I hate you, Mom!" door-slam moments. Give 'em enough order and you won't get the "Dad, I'm in a prison in Tijuana" moments.

You've been their age. They've never been yours.

Parents, those young people need you. I swear it. Keep trying, even when it seems like you're talking to a brick wall. Be honest. Teenagers aren't perfect, and neither are you. Tell them about the mistakes you made when you were young. Yes, even about the paint thinner and the border police that time in Panama. You've just got to speak their language a little bit to get through, and maybe even learn a few ninety-second handshakes. But once you do, I promise, these kids will soak in what you have to say. Fight to connect with the young people in your family. Fight to help them find their way. Be there for them, and someday they'll be there for you. That's family. And family is everything.

My grandmothers each had twenty-one kids. I saw my one grandma the other day, and she's pregnant right now. Stopped having sex twenty-five years ago and the babies are still coming. My family is 700 strong, and I throw a reunion for the whole lot of them every year. It costs me an arm and two legs, but I do it.

But it's more than worth it. Families go through it all together. The good, the bad. We laugh together and cry together. Most of all, we look out for each other. If you're making a family, you're doing God's work. It's never easy, but the reward will go on for generations. Long after you're gone. Now that is an amazing thing.

CHAPTER

3

A LOT OF PEOPLE, MOST PEOPLE, EVERYBODY SHOULD BE A MIDGET

Midgets are good people. I'm not afraid to say it. I know I'm going out on a limb. How often do you see a midget on America's Most Wanted? How often do you see John Walsh telling you to be on the lookout for a three-foot-tall man?

This country would be much better off if we were all midgets. They're better than us. They stay out of trouble. They all have jobs. You know in the grocery store, when they scan your items over that little window? There's a midget under there, working his little behind off, adding all that crap up.

I know, I know, I'm going to hell. Apparently "midget" is a derogatory term. I'm working on that. They prefer "little people." I'm 6'12", 295lbs, all y'all are little people to me. Y'all know I like to joke, right? If you don't realize that by chapter 3, your reading comprehension needs some work.

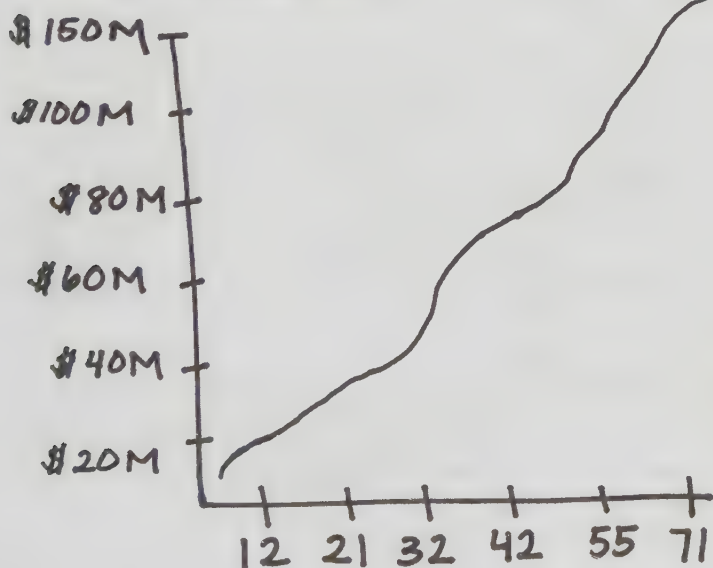


Shorter people are better

You know, when we take ourselves too seriously it can greatly lower our quality of life. You can always find some reason to be offended. You can find a reason to walk around mad all day, I promise. You know these people with scowls on their faces all the time? They're at Disneyland and they look like they're about to go postal on someone? Sitting on the Dumbo ride, nostrils flaring? "How come there ain't any black elephants on this ride?"

Come on, now, it ain't all that bad. If we all had a sense of humor about ourselves and our differences, this world would be so much nicer. No angry mobs burning flags. No white hoods. Nobody being dragged out of trucks and beaten with bricks. We're very different, and that's okay. Different customs, different opinions, different skin colors. Let's celebrate that. Let's have fun with that.

Financial success of black comedian



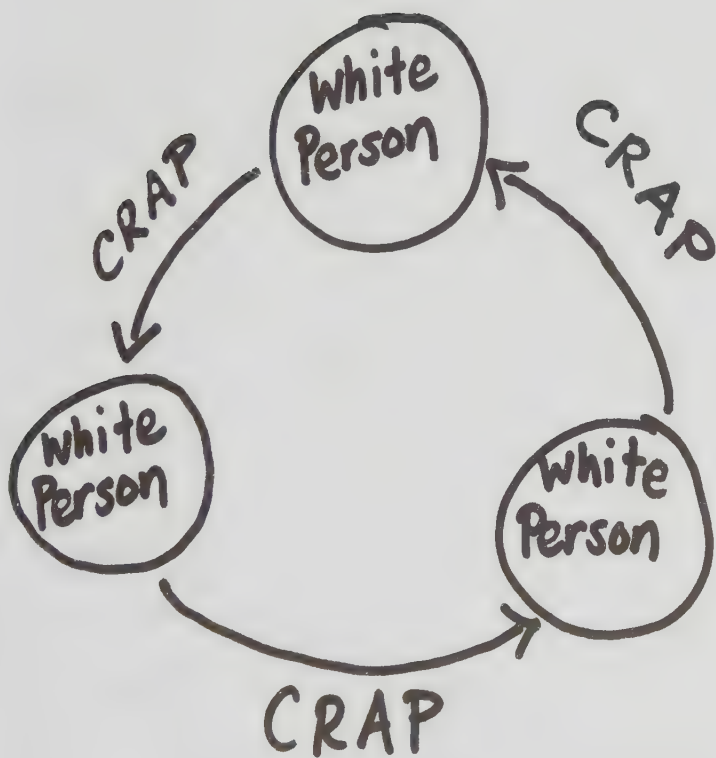
Number of "white people do
this, black people do that"
jokes they tell

Why do white folks like water so much? Beaches, pools, lakes. On a hot day, that's where all the white people are. Waterskiing, waving to the other white people on the shore, everyone listening to Neil Diamond and Celine Dion, counting their money.

We don't go near the water. No way, no day. If we liked water we would have jumped off those boats 200 years ago. Nope. Look at the Olympics. Lots of black people. All on land. If it's on dry land, we're all over it. The one-hundred-meter dash. And all those Kenyans running forty-nine miles, weighing forty-nine pounds. If it's dry, we can fly. We do dashes, but don't like splashes. We won't even mess with hockey, 'cause that water might melt.

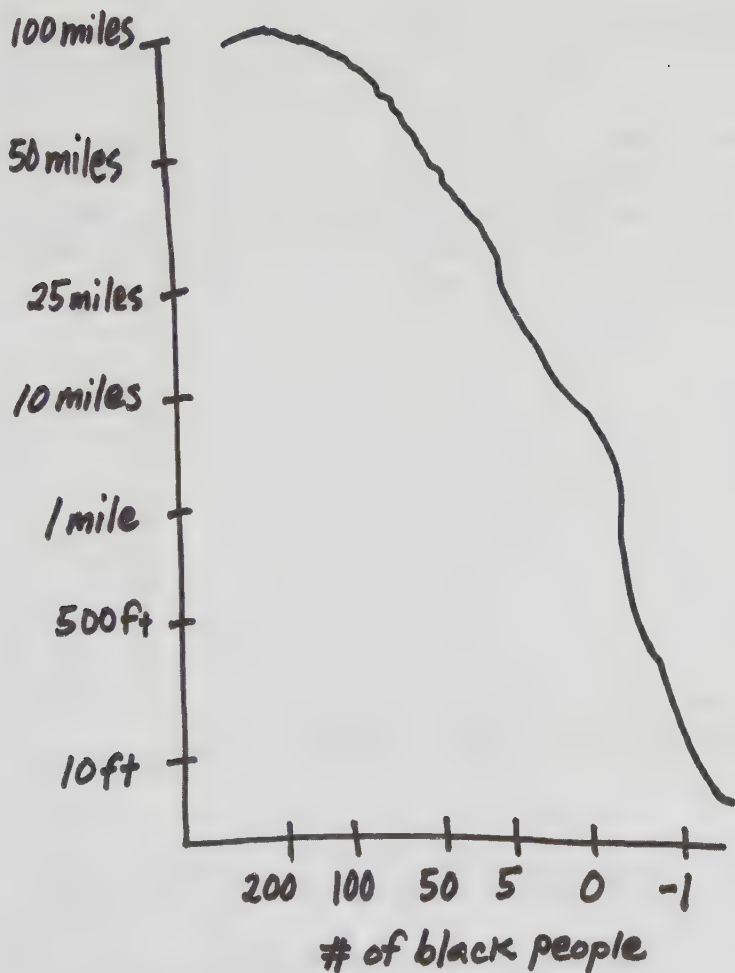
Black people even laugh different than white people. I can't believe it. I've seen it a million times. Black men cannot sit still when they laugh. They're rocking back and forth, slapping anything and everything they can get their hands on. I look over in the same audience, there's a white lady laughing just as hard, ain't moving a bone in her body. Why is that? Just another one of those wonderful differences, without any rhyme or reason.

White people have garage sales every week. What is that? What do you white people do on Friday and Saturday nights that makes y'all want to get up and put all your shi* in the front yard?



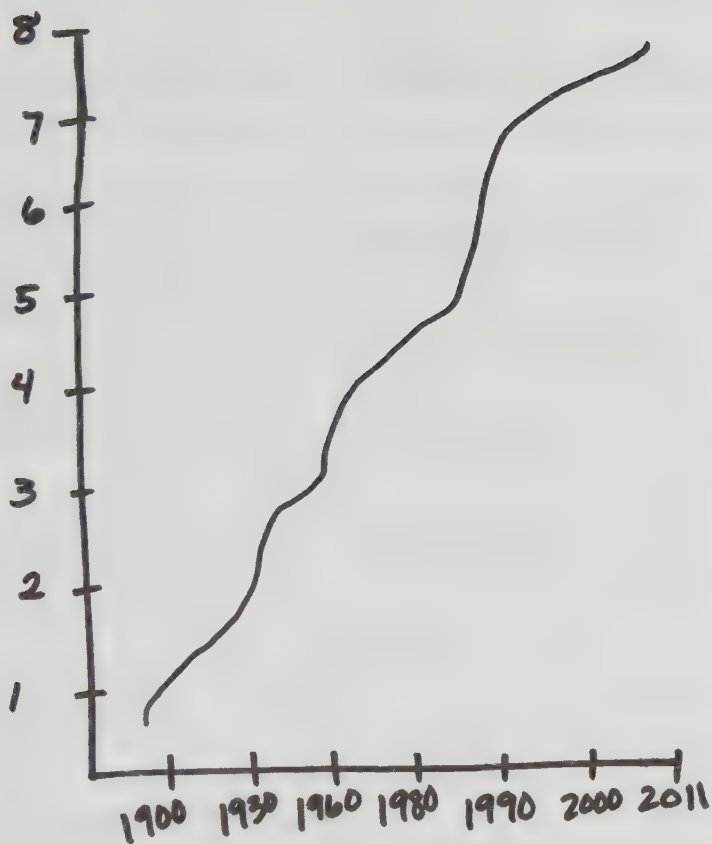
Why don't black people go camping? Are we the only people who realize that a thin-ass tent isn't going to stop a grizzly bear? Hell, I have kinfolk who run from squirrels. You think we're going to hop in a truck, drive into the middle of nowhere, and curl up in a sleeping bag next to a mountain lion? I don't think so. No running water. No lights. No heat. No, thank you.

Distance
from Bears



Number of black people
located near Live bears

You won't find black people anywhere near the Dakotas, North or South. And that's probably for the best, too. If we started camping, our children would have names like Sequoia Johnson, Yosemite Washington, Yellowstone Jones. What is going on with the names we use for our kids? It's gone overboard, hasn't it? I met an eight-year-old last week named Chlamydia. Our kids are falling behind in school, spending their first eight years of life figuring out how to spell their own damned names. You don't want your child left behind? Name them something more traditional. Nate. Marcus. Wanda. Not LaDonis or Octavius. Just a syllable or two will do just fine. Ninety percent of the students at Harvard are named either Blaine or Claire. That's a fact!



Number of syllables in
African American names
since 1900

We're all basically the same, though. Some minor differences. Y'all eat pumpkin pie, we eat sweet potato pie. Y'all catch an eight-pound bass, you hold it up and throw it back in the water. Now hold on just a minute. That there's dinner, bubba. Don't throw that thing back with a big old hole in his lip. All the other fish laughing at him. "You thought that was a real worm, Clyde?"

But African Americans aren't even the number-one minority in this country. We lost the title to about 50,000,000 Latinos. Those people can reproduce, can't they? That Julio Iglesias music comes on and they just start making babies.

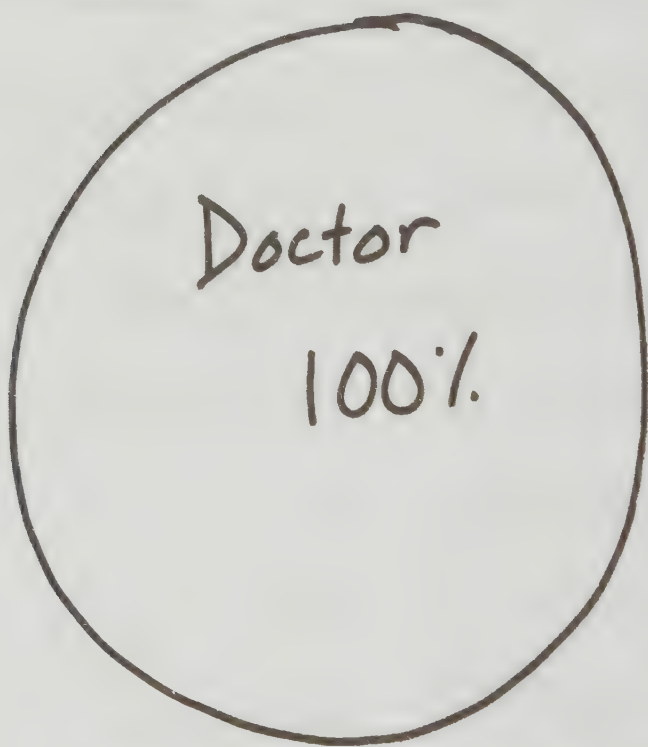
But seriously, I love Latinos. When I'm president I'm going to hire all Mexicans. I joke, that's what I do. People used to joke that Taco Bell was the Mexican phone company, but I'll tell you what, they can do anything. They work their maracas off. Don't believe me? Go to a Chinese restaurant. On your way out, look in the kitchen and see who's making that food. They aren't exactly Chinese, are they?

That's not knocking those of the Asian persuasion. Y'all work your behinds off too. Doing all that complex math and riding around in Lexuses. I salute you. I went to Hong Kong once. They'd put it right in the middle of Chinatown. All the merchandise said, "Made Just Around the Corner" on it. They make everything over there. There's a factory factory in Seoul. Entire factories rolling out on a conveyor belt. Most babies are made in China now, too, then shipped to American wombs for delivery.

<u>Made in China</u>	<u>Made in USA</u>
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Stereos	Whoopie Cushion
Footwear	Fried Twinkies
Medical Supplies	Snooki
Clothes	Big Gulps
Televisions	Barbecues
phones	Missiles
Computers	Sex tapes
printers	Pork Rinds

All Asians are doctors, too. Fully capable physicians. I had a heart attack in Shanghai once. My cab driver pulled over and cut my chest open while a street vendor performed a bypass with a pair of chopsticks. All of 'em, doctors. Yao Ming sewed up his own ACL at halftime once. Asians are the smartest people in the world.



Professions of
Asian People

Muslims are good folks too. They have all the oil in the world but only ride camels. Now that's living green! They came over here and got to work. I know it's a stereotype, but they really dove into the convenience-store business, didn't they? I'm not knocking it at all. These people are entrepreneurs. You think it's easy to sell phone cards, Wonder bread, and nudie magazines at the same time? These people are masters of commerce.

I will say, though, a few of these clerks are a little off. I was in the 7-Eleven last week. I bought three packs of HoHos, a Wall Street Journal, two loaves of bread, nachos, a can of Pringles, a MoonPie, six Cokes, three bananas, a honey bun, and a Zagnut. This man looks at me. "You want a bag with that?" No, I want you to carry it out to the car with me. Come on, man, do I look like I've got a pouch in my stomach like a kangaroo?

But I love this country. It's one of a kind. There is nowhere in the world with this many people mixed up. Only folks you hardly see anymore are Native Americans. Whew, they got a raw deal, didn't they? They brought corn out to the Pilgrims. Should have brought some tomahawk pie for dessert and sent those folks back to jolly old England.

They made a little comeback with the casinos, though, almost 400 years later. You're playing blackjack at Foxwoods, you can bet they're scalping your pocketbook. The Pechanga Nation is getting its reparations one slot machine at a time. "This is Running Moose, and he'll be your craps dealer this evening." I love it, 'cause those reservations needed money. We gave them smallpox, now they're giving us complementary buffet tickets. What a strange and wonderful country this is.

But it's our story. It ain't pretty all the way through, but here we are, all mashed together. And when you look at all our differences, you start to realize how boring things would be without 'em.

It's the same with cooking. I watch the Food Network all the time. I've got one of those special TVs that shoots whatever they're cooking right through the screen and into your mouth. Love me some Food Network. Paula Deen is my secret crush. You reading this, Paula Deen? Hit me up on the celly. Maybe you and I could put a little Oreo casserole on the menu.

You know how bad food would be if it was all just one flavor? These chefs have got it figured out. Salt goes best with sweet. What's bacon without eggs? Mashed potatoes without gravy? Burgers without fries? Spaghetti without meatballs? Bay leaves without Chinese five-spice? See, I told you I watch some Food Network.

There's no place in the world with as many ingredients as these United States of America. In fact, it's all of those different flavors that unite us. We're all different, and in that we are all the same. The American dinner table is a curious one. It's ribs with hummus. It's bologna sandwiches with sushi rolls. It's buffalo meat with salsa. It's matzo-ball soup with manicotti. It's red beans and rice with a thirty-two-ounce Slushy.

But we can still break bread over it.

CHAPTER

4

“SIR, HOW ARE YOU GOING TO PAY FOR THIS?”
“HELL, I’M WONDERING THE SAME DAMNED THING.”

They say, “Mo’ money, mo’ problems,” but they’re wrong. To those who’ve been in the trenches, it’s “No money, mo’ problems.” It’s gotten rough out there. I know it. The other day I passed an entire bank sleeping on a subway grate. It was all sunburned, using a giant newspaper as a blanket. Just sad.

A homeless man approached me in New York City not three months ago. This man was the most down and out, dejected and rejected guy I’ve seen in my life. I wrote him a check for \$1,000 right there on the spot. He looked at me in disbelief, smiling from ear to ear, then headed off to cash it. The moment that man turned the corner I whipped out my phone and reported that check missing. The way I see it, he goes to cash that check, he’s getting six months free room and board, and I’m not out \$1,000. We’re both happy. Done and

done.

It is a slow day in the small town of Pumphandle, and the streets are deserted. Times are tough, everybody is in debt, and everybody is living on credit.

A tourist visiting the area drives through town, stops at the motel, and lays a \$100 bill on the desk, saying he wants to inspect the rooms upstairs to pick one for the night. As soon as he walks upstairs, the motel owner grabs the bill and runs next door to pay his debt to

the butcher. The butcher takes the \$100 and runs down the street to retire his debt to the pig farmer. The pig farmer takes the \$100 and heads off to pay his bill to his supplier, the Co-op. The guy at the Co-op takes the \$100 and runs to pay his debt to the local prostitute, who has also been facing hard times and has had to offer her "services" on credit. The hooker rushes to the hotel and pays off her room bill with the hotel owner. The hotel owner then places the \$100 back on the counter so the traveler will not suspect anything. At that moment the traveler comes down the stairs, states that the rooms are not satisfactory, picks up the \$100, and leaves.

No one produced anything. No one earned anything. However, the whole town is now out of debt and looks to the future with a lot more optimism. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is how a stimulus package works. – Anonymous

It's getting serious out there, people. I've been hittin' that McDonald's value menu three times a day. Burgers, fries, and a Coke for ninety-nine cents? It's like the 1930s in there. No joke, Mickey D's is like The Grapes of Wrath these days. Folks riding around on Model Ts, covered in dirt. I ordered a double cheeseburger, they just folded a regular one in half.

But I'm used to lean times. I'm a survivor, y'all. I've been through this stuff beforé. I grew up in "Hotlanta" when it wasn't even lukewarm. It was poor. Up until about ten years ago the number-one industry down there was doing odd jobs for Ted Turner. Back in the day, my neighbors were so poor, folks were breaking into their house to give 'em things.

I've lived at the YMCA, and I've lived in the penthouse. I've lived on Main Street, and I've purchased on Easy Street. I know nothing can make people worry more than money trouble. Marriages fall apart, families lose houses. But I also know there's light at the end of the tunnel.*

**NOTE: Light at end of tunnel may be oncoming train. George Wallace Inc. bears no responsibility for injuries and/or deaths caused by railway collisions.*

So let Uncle George talk a little bit here. I'm going to start you off with the practical, 'cause you've got to meet me half-way. Then I'm going to hit you up with some life advice that I hope you will carry with you. I promise you folks, you deserve better. And you can have better, too.

First Thing to Remember: You Are Not Alone

Never forget it. This economy's got everyone worried. I guarantee your neighbors and family members are feeling it too. Reach out to those people. But don't ask for money, 'cause they're probably about to ask you for some.

A night at the movies can cost about, what, \$1,700? Why not have your family or your neighbors over for a game night instead? Oh, and why not have Aunt Susie and the Johnstons bring over their leftovers to combine with yours? Y'all can put on a Leftoverpalooza right in your own home. Fried chicken marinara. Macaroni-and-Fritos casserole. Short ribs and Rice-a-Roni. You'll save money leaning on each other, and

you'll grow closer too. You might find yourself having a good, much-needed laugh. And who knows? You might just invent a new delicacy while you're at it.

And here's something to think about. When that bill collector calls, you aren't alone either. That's a person on the end of the line. You think they like their lousy job trying to track broke people down? You get on the phone with that person and you laugh it off. "Nah, I ain't got your money! None of it, Jack! I know those bills are late. They're gonna be late next month too, Jack!" You might just make their day. If you really work it, they might zero your balance out right then and there.

Remember, nobody is coming to haul you off. There are no debtors' prisons anymore. They messed up when they got rid of those. Those suckers used to be able to drag people away for owing money. It's not worth writing a suicide note and taking a bottle of Cialis over. Then you'll be having really hard times. So stay calm. What's the worst that can happen? Your credit rating goes from 625 to 618?

Who are those freecreditreport.com jackasses? They're running around dressed as pirates, singing songs that get stuck in my head for the next seven months. If I ever run into those guys, someone's gonna need to go to freecoronersreport.com.

At any rate, if you do end up on the phone with a bill collector, and you decide you can throw a little bit of money at them, ask for the fees to be waived. Ask for better rates. It's a well-kept secret, but the person on the end of that line can wheel and deal a little bit.

What's that, reader? You want some inspirational mumbo-jumbo? I'm getting to that, all right. Bear with me. George is trying to put some cheddar in your pockets, and he's start-

ing with the basics, like this “no duh” little gem.

Do Free Stuff, Dummy!

Believe it or not, there's a bunch of free stuff out there. You take your kids to Chuck E. Cheese's, you know you're gonna drop about \$400 and have to listen to giant mechanical puppets sing at you all night. You know how much you'll spend at the library? Nada. Check what your community centers have to offer. YMCA, YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs too. Concerts, movies, festivals. It doesn't have to be Disney World for you and yours to have a good time.

Hell, when I was a kid we used to find ways to make a little money. We used to play kick the can or kick the bottle. We'd kick those things over to the redemption center and get two pennies each. We used to return coat hangers for a little cash back. We sold lemonade, helped the watermelon man sell his stuff, picked wild blackberries and sold 'em. We were enterprising little sons of guns. Hell, we sold tickets to the neighborhood cat fights. Set up chairs. Two of us would be the corner men, the other would be the ref.

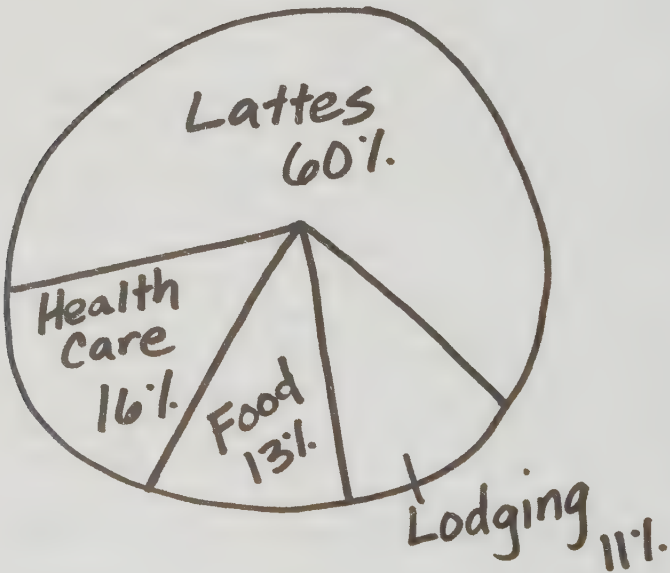
Okay, so by now you're teaming up with your friends and neighbors. You're doing a bunch of fun, free stuff. Your pocketbooks and wallets are already getting a little fatter, and your soul is feeling a little more at ease. But we're going to keep going. We're here to stop the worry and get right in a hurry.

Get Real with Your Silly Expenses, Part 1 – The Latte

Don't get that latte—you know, the one that you spend \$4.50 on every morning? If you only get one, and only on workdays, you're talking about spending \$1,200 a year on your coffee. You're telling me you can't afford that trip to Maui because you like paying someone else to grind up beans and

run hot water through 'em? That's why they've got all of those sofas and loveseats in Starbucks. 'Cause you're paying rent. If you're scraping by, how about grabbing a canister of Sanka?

America's Current Expenses

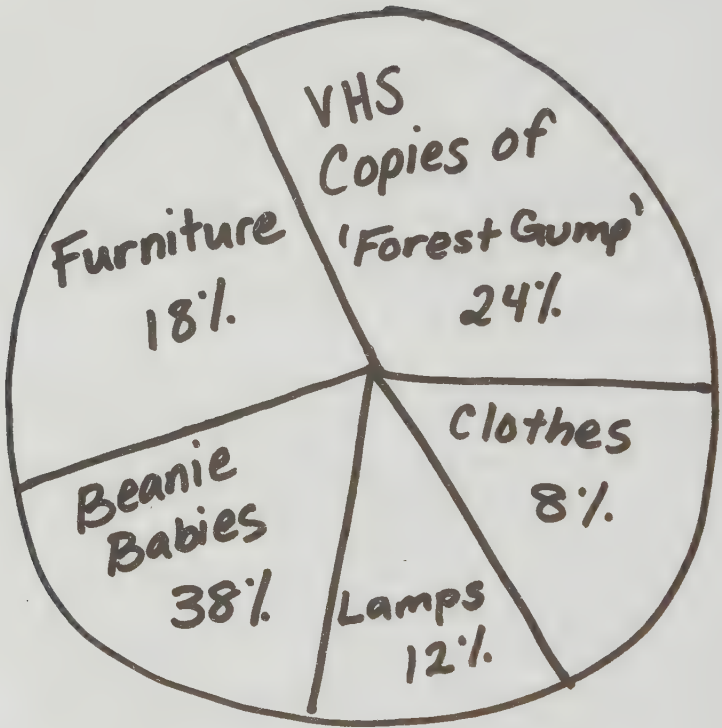


Cancel What You Don't Use

If you're at all like me, you get 400 channels but only watch 12 of 'em. Find out what you can cancel. Might thin your bill out a little. Same with your cell phone. You've probably got thirty features you never use. You don't have to get calls from space. No need to launch missiles from your Motorola. Cancel those extras, 'cause they add up. Oh, and you know the gym you belong to, and now you can't even remember where it is? Cancel that membership too. And what is wrong with this place, 24-Hour Fitness? Got a sign on the door, "Open 6 a.m. to Midnight." Canceled.

Sell A Bunch of Your Crap

Some of y'all are hanging onto something that ain't nothing, and you can't afford anything. Get into that closet, dig into that attic, dive into that basement. You've got a mountain of stuff that you don't need, I guarantee it. Time to simplify and pay a few bills at the same time. Make a big pitcher of lemonade and throw that stuff in front of your house on a Saturday morning. Put up a few signs around town. So far we're at about \$2.00 to make the lemonade and \$3.00 in poster board. Watch the cars come screeching up to your house. Craziest thing I've ever seen. People want that crap, and they will dive out of their cars while they're still running. Now is your chance to get \$2.00 for those alphabet refrigerator magnets you haven't used since the Clinton presidency and end up with a nice wad of cash at the end of the day.



America's Current Belongings

Don't Go Buying People Stuff

Give a gift of service instead. A nice card with a coupon for a night of babysitting. Or mowing the lawn. They'll appreciate that much more than some piece of Louis Vuitton luggage. Okay, fine, they won't, but you're flat broke, so do what I say.

Quit Paying to Send Things

You don't have enough money to send a package? Put the recipient's address in the top left-hand corner and don't put a lick of postage on it. They're going to return that thing to the person you're sending it to. Now tell me George ain't thinkin'.*

**Note: This is completely illegal and should not be done under any circumstances.*

Beyond the Nickels and Dimes

Okay, enough of the helpful hints. By now you're swimming in Lincolns (don't laugh, those suckers add up). It's time to graduate to success. George is about to go big-picture on you folks. The way out. The light at the end of the tunnel. Let's roll.

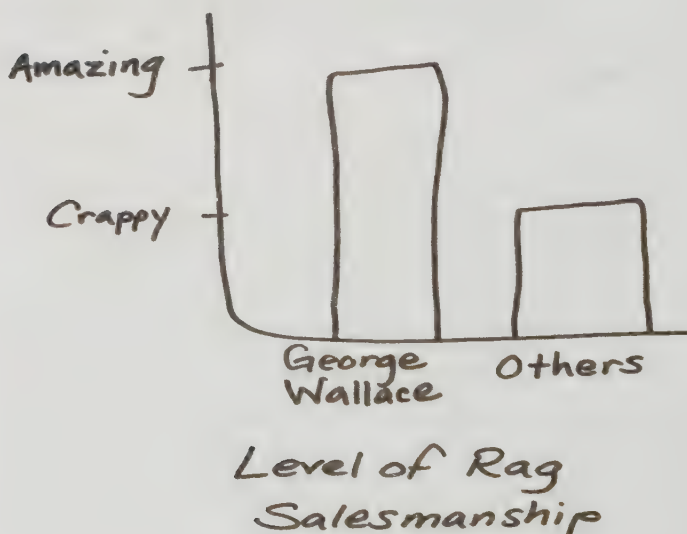
It All Comes Back Around

If you need help, help others. Look at it this way: if things get bad enough for you, Jimmy Carter might just come and build you a house himself. God bless Habitat for Humanity. This is one of the greatest organizations on the face of the earth. So get out there and hammer some nails. If you're sitting around looking at job listings, call these people up and find out how you can help out. These events are usually sponsored by companies. Those execs show up on site. Get out there and let these contractors and CEOs see how you work. You never know where it might lead. I promise you, when you help others it comes back around to you.

There are lots of places to volunteer. I'm telling you, when you give you're gonna get. God keeps a scorecard for this stuff. Imagine if everyone took the time they spent twiddling their thumbs and did just one nice thing for someone. There'd be a whole lot of smiling going on, wouldn't there? Look at Oprah, always giving and always receiving. I want to be Oprah someday, just a rich black lady, riding around in a private jet, handing out cars to folks. That would be the life.

Honor Your Essence

From the time I was little I loved two things: meeting folks and making 'em laugh. But no one was paying me for that, so I had to go to college and learn stuff. Then, eventually, I had to get real jobs. First, I sold rags. Literally, door-to-door. Everyone needs rags—auto shops, funeral homes, dentists, and car washes. And you know what? I ended up being the best darned rag salesman in the lower forty-eight states. Yeah, I said it!



My next job was selling bus ads in New York City. That wasn't too flashy either. I was going door-to-door, trying to convince folks that they needed ads on buses. On the sides, on the back, inside. A lot of space for ads on those big ol' buses. So I pounded the pavement. "Hop on the bus, Gus. No need to be coy, Roy. Put your business in the streets."

Somehow, again, I sold more bus ads than anyone else. Now, did I have a passion for selling rags? Not especially. Was my daddy a rag salesman before me? No. Did I come from a long line of Wallaces who sold ads on the sides of buses? Of course not.

What happened? Well, I had stumbled upon a very powerful combination. I had found a job that honored my essence. Sure, I was selling folks rag, then I was getting folks to advertise their car dealerships on buses in the Bronx. But what was I really doing at the core of it all? Meeting folks and making 'em laugh.

And people, when your essence is shining through, good things happen. For me, it was walking into an office to sell bus ads to a guy who owned a comedy club. I met him, and I made him laugh. Next thing you know, he was telling me about an open mic night at his club, The Comic Strip. I jumped on stage and did five minutes. I've been in front of audiences ever since.

It all locked into place. I had been delivered to where I needed to be. The moment I realized I could meet folks, make 'em laugh, and make a good living at it, there was no other option for me.

If you find a job that doesn't honor your essence, you're going to hate it. You're going to phone it in. You're going to leave it or lose it. I don't care if you're scrubbing toilets, if that

job allows you to be you, at your core, you will succeed.

If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, "Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well." – Martin Luther King Jr.

You're scattering and smothering at the Waffle House for a living? You've still got to incorporate who you are into that job. You like to joke? You'd better be the funniest hash-brown chef in the world, with or without teeth. You like to sing? You'd better be using that spatula as a microphone. Your work doesn't define you, people. How you do your work defines you.

Visualize Your Dream Scenario

There may be no more powerful thing than picturing yourself with what you want, knowing to your core that you will get there. This may sound easy enough, but it isn't. We're taught to aim low. We're taught to be practical. Don't get me wrong—there is a time and a place for being practical. But on the flip side, life is too short to ignore what we want for ourselves.

What is it you want? Is it a Lear jet? Is it a house that looks like it's straight out of the Smurf village? You want to live on a tugboat? Hell, I don't know what all you people want. But I know you need to keep that dream in your mind at all times.

Keep a picture of that Smurf house in your wallet. Go meet the tugboat dealer. Get his card. Have him show you a few tugboats. Keep that thing firmly in your sights. It's the only way it may one day be yours.

"I am" is God. And whatever you add to "I am," you become. Whatever you add to "I am" is added unto you. – Dr. Frederick J. Eikerenkoetter II, aka "Reverend Ike"

Don't Dwell in the Past

I know a lot of folks who beat themselves up for decisions they made in the past. That's nothing but a trap. We can change the present, and we can sure as hell change the future. The past is the only place where you're going to keep making the same dumb decisions, get in the same fender benders, miss the same opportunities.

As a comedian there is nothing worse than bombing. I stepped up in front of a thousand lawyers at a convention once. Believe me when I tell you there wasn't a solitary peep from that crowd. Not so much as a giggle. I may have seen half a smile from the bald guy at table 21, and I was up there for an entire hour. Now, I did my part. I gave it my all. Quite simply, it just wasn't my night. I had about fourteen minutes of soul searching afterwards. Then I did absolutely the healthiest thing you can do at a time like that. I let it go. It was done, and it was never going to happen again.

The past is not an endless collection of failures. It is instead a magnificent collection of lessons. You are being shown something when you fail. I promise. In the throes of defeat there is always a piece of armor that will help you in the next fight. To believe anything different is doing yourself, and your soul, a great disservice.

Bravely Moving Forward

You are taking the lessons in the past and moving on, that much the wiser. You are surrounded by people there to support and understand you. You are already taking seemingly

small steps to improve your situation, steps that will prove to be the start of a much longer journey.

You move forward not as a square peg trying to jam yourself into a round hole. You are your own shape, your own essence, and you will build your livelihood around that. Your work will make you happy, and others will be happy with, even inspired by, your work.

I am truly blessed. I have the greatest job in the world: meeting good people and making them laugh. Not only that, but I have been fortunate to make a good living at it. My wish for you? True success that allows you to be yourself, in all your glory. You deserve it. You can have it. You can start right now.

Well, once you finish the rest of my book, anyway.

CHAPTER

5

HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOUR MIND JUST GOT UP AND RAN OUT ON YOU?

Studies show that over 86 percent of unhappiness is caused by a simple yet hard-to-control phenomenon: good old-fashioned stupidity. You unhappy? Somewhere along the line you did something stupid. Find yourself in a mess? You probably did something stupid.

You might have done it a long time ago. Doesn't make it any less stupid. Ain't no statute of limitations on stupid. And stupid can last. Stupid is a renewable resource. Mankind has done stupid things since the dawn of time, ever since the first caveman tried to play fetch with a saber-toothed tiger. We've perfected stupid.

Believe it or not, we can work to break this ancient cycle of dumbness. But before we get to solutions, let's explore the

many varieties of stupidity. Perhaps some of this will sound familiar.

From-the-Get-Go Stupid

There ain't many things that start out crap, then turn out diamonds. You take a crappy job? That job will be crappy till the moment you leave it. Shack up with a crappy-ass man? He'll be crappy till the moment you leave him. Eat some crappy food? You'll feel crappy till the moment it leaves you. Simple rule: if it starts out crappy, it probably ends up crappy.

This is why putting your thinking cap on is crucial at the outset of any and all things you do. My best friend Jerry Seinfeld said he's going to build a house from the ground up. I said, "Jerry, that's probably the best way to go about it. You start with the roof up, you're gonna run into some problems."

A long while ago Flight 5050 was taking off, ran right off the runway into the East River. I was in the airport when it happened. "Splash!" Broke into three pieces. Who ever heard of Flight fifty-fifty? It's always "Flight 216" or "Flight 308." But no, they told these people up front it was fifty-fifty. "Flight fifty-fifty, head out to Runway 13 and give it your best shot."

Starting your day with a healthy breakfast and a quick jog? You're probably not from-the-get-go stupid. Start your day with a box of Ring Dings and a hike into an abandoned mine-shaft? I'm talking about your foolish behind.

But don't panic if this is you. There is hope. There is a friend, always with you, whose only job is to protect you from your crappy ideas.

Your Inner Voice

This is the number-one cure for from-the-get-go stupidity-

ty. Believe it or not, even the biggest moron on Earth has an inner voice that might, just might, make him a little smarter. The problem is, folks never pay it any mind. This inner voice tries like hell to let you know when something ain't right. Call it instinct or your gut, we ignore it most of the time. Next time you have a sneaking suspicion you're messing something up, don't move. Listen up good. You might hear it.

I used to be on a radio show on WMJC in Washington, D.C. It was The Les Brown Show. Had a good time, and we're still friends. But one day I was doing my thing, and my inner voice told me to get the hell on. I quit at that moment, live on the air. Didn't feel right anymore, so I just walked out. And I was glad I did. Went up to New York, started sitting in on KISS 98.7 with Isaac Hayes, rest in peace. I listened to my inner voice, and to this day it is one of the best decisions I ever made.

Always remember, that little voice in your head may be smarter than you are, unless it's telling you to kill the president or stab yourself in the neck with a fork. Those aren't the voices I'm talking about.*

** Note: George Wallace and/or George Wallace Inc. bear no responsibility for readers' inner voices who advocate kidnapping, arson, tax evasion, jaywalking, running over jaywalkers, kidnapping jaywalkers, or murdering tax collectors and/or Nancy Grace.*

Can't-See-Right-in-Front-of-Your-Face Stupid

Some of you people still can't believe it's not butter. In fact, I can't believe you can't believe it's not butter. What do I have to do to convince you? Butter ain't on the ingredients list. It ain't from a cow. It ain't been near a cow. It ain't been within a thousand miles of a cow. It ain't apple butter. It ain't peanut butter. It ain't shea butter. It ain't cocoa butter. It ain't almond

butter. People, the stuff ain't freakin' butter!

And who are these people at Dodger Stadium, singing Take Me Out to the Ball Game? You're already at the damned ball game! You've been going to the ball game since you were seven years old. "Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jacks"? Why both? There are peanuts in the Cracker Jacks. "I don't care if I ever get back." You don't seem like the sharpest tools in the shed. You may not even find your way back. And hell, what are you gonna do, sit there in an empty stadium? Game ends at 10 p.m.

• Every time they catch a serial killer, the neighbors can't believe it. "He seemed like a normal guy. I can't believe he would have that many bodies under his floorboards."

What the hell is wrong with these people? You know that man was a damned freak. They just weren't paying attention when he shouted at the mailbox and twitched like a sprinkler on crack. These people make me sick. Is there some way we can match up these serial killers with these stupid people? Maybe it would help thin their numbers. Yeah, I said it!

Keep your eyes peeled, people. Where there's smoke, there's fire. And if your house is on fire, you'd better get a move on. You see flames, run, don't walk, out of your home. A door, a window, through a wall. Just get the hell out.

I've heard firemen say that if your house catches fire you should fill a tub with water, then climb in. Let me tell you people something. Your house catches fire, you can't get out, you go in that bathroom, you fill that tub with water, you get in there? You might as well throw in a couple of carrots and an onion. Maybe some bay leaves and a pinch of Lawry's Seasoned Salt. 'Cause you're gonna be soup. Cream-of-asshole soup.

A friend once told me that he had been in a fight, but he wasn't sure if he had gotten his ass kicked or not. How can you not surmise this information? I told him if the guy's shoe is missing and there's a sock in your butt, you just got your ass kicked. Another sure sign? When the authorities come, if the cops run to him and the paramedics run to you, you got your ass kicked. What more evidence do you need?

You may be slowly realizing that you are in a life-or-death battle with can't-see-right-in-front-of-your-face stupidity. Don't be scared. You are not alone. And please take heart. There is one ally who can help to pull you through.

The No-B.S. Friend

People have a tendency to surround themselves with like-minded people. This can be very dangerous, especially for the stupid. They end up running in packs, aimlessly wandering, discussing stupid things, walking into walls, off cliffs, into wood chippers, et cetera.

I'm telling you, there may be no more important a human being to bring into your life than the no-B.S. friend. This is the objective observer whom you may not always agree with, but who is never afraid to tell you when you're stepping in a big, steamy pile of mess. When you can't see the roadblock up ahead, the no-B.S. friend is in the passenger seat, letting you know.

This person won't let you get away with your crap. He's not afraid to call you out, and there may be times when it ain't a whole lot of fun to be around him. As a result, something very sad happens. You push this valuable friend away. And guess who you replace him with? People who don't say boo to you about nothing. Just like that, you're back to where you started.

Unnecessary-Risk Stupid

Studies show that dying can have a huge effect on your quality of life. The good Lord will come and get you when he's ready. No need to help his almighty ass along by doing something stupid. But people do, all the time.

Did you watch the Winter Olympics this year? That guy died on the luge. Slid right off the track into a telephone pole. Rest in peace. But I will say, when you're lying on a piece of fiberglass going 150 miles an hour, you're not exactly the sharpest knife in the drawer, are you?

About every twelve days a killer whale eats somebody. Who are these stupid people gettin' in a tank with a killer whale? Says right on the label it's a killer whale. "I can't believe a killer whale killed that lady." Why's that so hard to believe? These animals are named for our safety. A grizzly bear does some grizzly things. There ain't enough money in the world to get me to hop in a cage and play a game of Twister with one.

And how come people say never to kick a man when he's down? Is there a better time? Can you tell me when the hell else you should kick him? Your foot is much closer when he's down. Much harder to kick a standing target. Believe me, I try it constantly. Ain't got a friend in the world, 'cause I'm always hauling off and kicking 'em. Believe me, this world is full of people who let a man get up, tried to kick him, and got their asses kicked. Don't risk it. You get that man down, kick him, and kick him good! Kick his ass from here to Montana!

Skydiving is the undisputed king of unnecessary risks. How long after the invention of the airplane did some stupid man jump out of one? "You know what would be great? If we went up about 10,000 feet, ran some string through a tablecloth, tied it to our backs, and dove the hell out." Are you stupid?

They don't make a tablecloth that can hold my butt. Hell, most airplanes can't even take off with Big George on board. They only book me on an Airbus 380. Got to have some torque when Wallace is in 17C!

The stupidity never ceases to amaze me. Not long ago a golfer reached down into a lake to get his ball, got his arm bitten off by an alligator. I'd be surprised if it hadn't happened in Florida. Take the penalty, dumbass. You're in Florida! F-L-A, Full of Live Alligators.

You see any body of water in the general vicinity of The Sunshine State, there's alligators in it. I won't even fly over a lake in Florida. You see a rain puddle, there's a pair of eyes sticking up, just waiting for your ass. You turn on the tap water, a gator flops out just snapping like hell. They're like dogs down there. People on South Beach walk their alligators. Blind people in Tampa are led around by them. No thanks, Florida. You need me, I'll be in Manhattan.

Unnecessary-risk stupid is by far the most dangerous form of dumb, but there is a way to avoid an early death or amputation. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you:

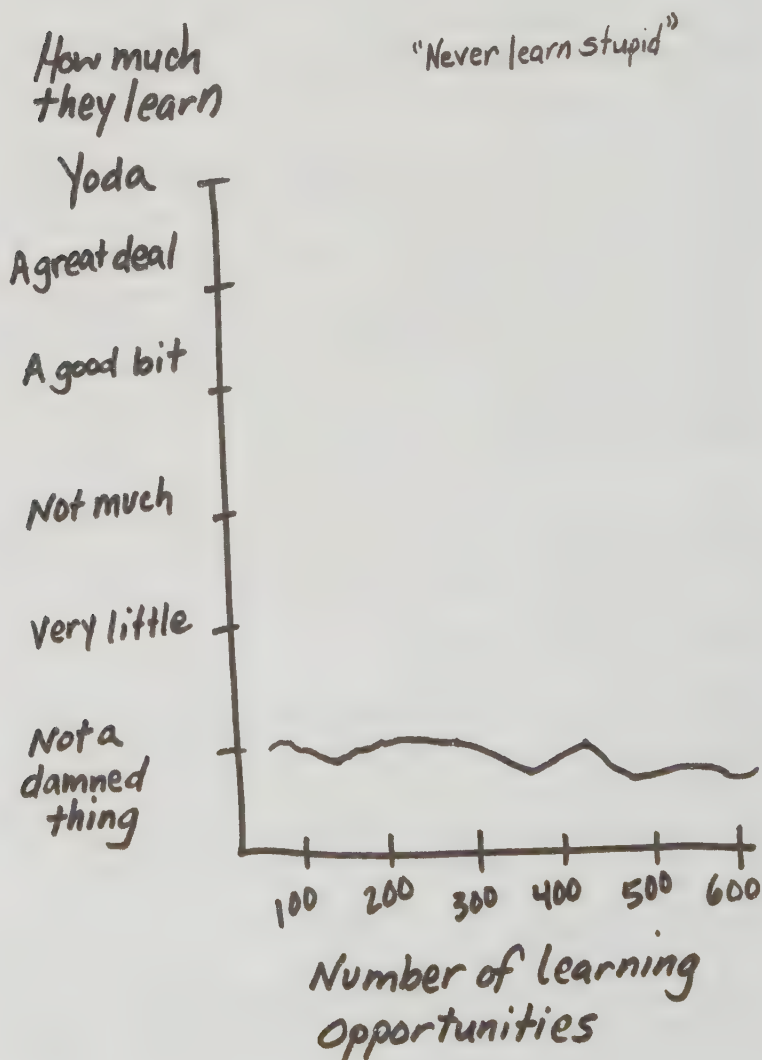
The Two Golden Questions

Before doing any and all activities, take thirteen seconds and ask yourself, "Could doing this thing literally tear my behind in half?" Then ask yourself, "Is this activity crucial to my livelihood, family life, and/or happiness?" If the answer is yes to the first and no to the second, don't do that stupid shit!

Never-Learn Stupid

This is the person who does the same stupid stuff over and over. You know this person. "I can't believe the man I met in

prison then married the day after he was paroled ran off with all my stuff, again." You have this friend, people. If you don't, then I'm probably talking about you!



Every time a baseball player gets hit with the ball, first thing he does before he goes after the pitcher is drop the bat. Why? The guy just hit you with a leather-bound rock going 100 miles an hour. If that's me, I ain't droppin' that bat. I'm bringing it with me. Put a stop to that real quick.

And of course there's the people playing the lottery. Chances of winning are the same as you waking up to find a leprechaun and Charlie Chaplin riding a unicorn through your living room. You been playing the lotto since 1971. That's \$1,500 in singles you'd have in your pocket right now. Know what, though? I'm not going after you people. Are you going to spend \$1 on chewing gum or buy that little ticket and have a chance to make more money than God?

So I get the lottery thing. Fine—if you're going to play, play. Someone's got to win, right? The stupid people are the ones who won't play if the jackpot's only \$40,000,000. You see all them zeroes? What the hell are you thinking? Forty million's not gonna make a difference in your life? Thirty-six million ain't worth the one-dollar investment? Hell, you work at Dairy Queen.

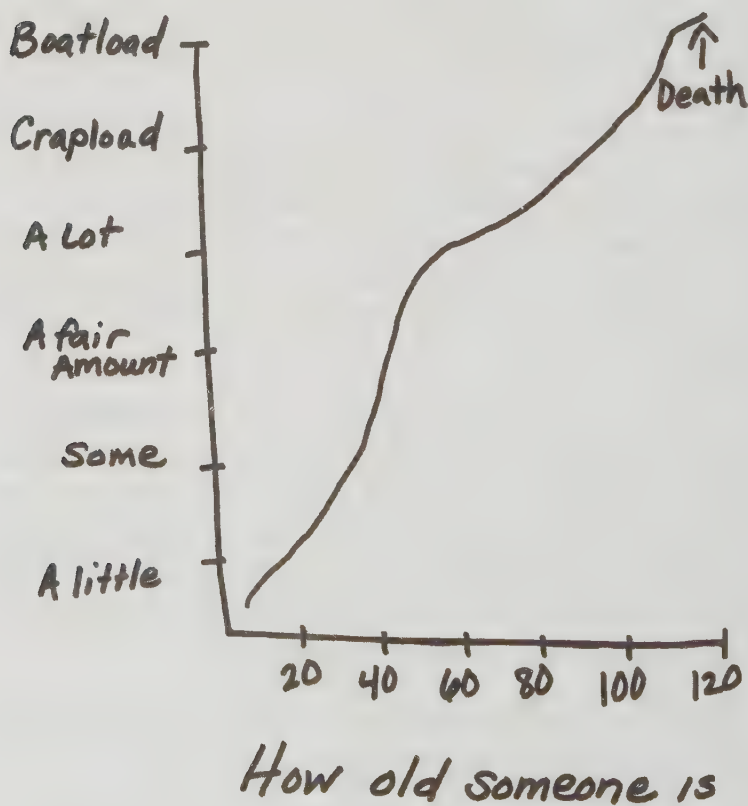
Never-learn is a sad form of stupidity, as the friends and family who might help guide this person out of the darkness eventually get sick and tired of watching him get in the same messes and move the hell on. If everyone you know suddenly won't return your calls and your emails are getting returned to sender, you may one of the estimated twelve million Americans afflicted with never-learn stupidity.

But wait! There is hope. There is a tried-and-true way to turn never-learn into forever-learn.

Sit Next to Old People. Like, All the Damned Time.

Old folks have been your age, but you've never been theirs. Listen to them. Especially you young people. Who's really lived it, felt it, and touched it? Old people know all the stories. The ins and outs. You will learn from them. I guarantee it.

*How much
they know*



Not to mention those folks are old as dirt. They are about to die. Helping you not be stupid will make them feel better about passing on. “Lawd, I saved that youngun from buyin’ a condo in Vegas. Now take me ’cross that River Jordan!”

Once old folks are gone, they’re gone. A whole lot of wisdom goes with them too. Have any of you missed the chance to soak up life lessons from someone who isn’t around anymore? I have. I’m sure a lot of you have too. Don’t miss that opportunity next time.

What-the-Hell-Did-You-Just-Say? Stupid

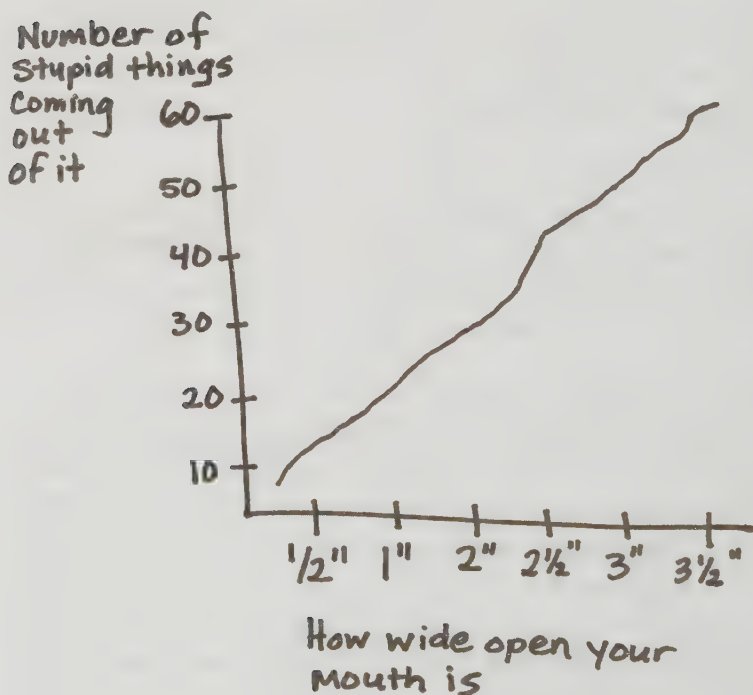
How come y’all say so much stupid stuff? Now, saying stupid stuff every time you open your mouth may seem harmless enough. Hell, it may make you the life of the party here and there. But in the long run it will make you less desirable to potential employers, less likely to find a life mate, and infinitely more likely to get your ass kicked by a smarter, bigger person.

A man turned to me on a flight last week and asked, “You goin’ all the way?” Man, I hope like hell I’m going all the way. I didn’t buy no halfway ticket! Is this man playing with a full deck? I was about to put him in the overhead.

Only time you stop mid-flight is on Southwest. Seriously, those planes stop all the time. Five legs from Dallas to Fort Worth? What the hell is that? Last week I ended up on a one-stop flight stopping at the same airport. Made a stop at Concourse B, continued to Concourse C. Are you kidding me? If you’re ever late for work, wave at a Southwest plane—they’ll land and pick you up. I will admit, Southwest planes can be fun. Most of them are convertibles. You can just stand up and stick your head out the roof. Amazing views.

But seriously, people just can't stop saying stupid things. Why the hell do people call it a "perm" if they have to go back to the salon two weeks later? Girl, that shit is a "temp." Someone saw me at the airport and said, "My wife's gonna die when I tell her I saw you." I said, "Well, don't tell her!"

My Uncle Bo asks the dumbest questions in the world. And if that ain't bad enough, he immediately answers 'em too. "Why the kids home, school out? What you cookin', chicken? Why's it hot, y'all got the heat on? Why aren't you walking, feet hurt? Why are you calling the doctor, you sick? Why you laughin', somethin' funny?" If you know the damned answers, why'd you even ask in the first place?



They recently found a part of the brain that keeps us from blurting out stupid stuff. It varies in size from person to person. So, I'm assuming Uncle Bo, and several of you readers out there, may be quite poorly endowed in this area. If you suspect this is the case, do not fret. There's a simple technique to try.

The Five-Second Delay

On live radio and television they've got everything on a five-second delay to make sure no one says anything stupid. People, install this delay in your mouth hole!

Anytime you're about to respond to someone about anything, repeat the comment in your mind a few times. Really listen to it, putting yourself in the position of the person or people who are going to hear you.

Though this tactic isn't foolproof, with practice you will opt not to say the aforementioned dumb comment instead of blurting it. With even more practice you will begin repairing your comments, then confidently saying them, knowing they're only a fraction as stupid as what you were going to say in the first place. Done and done.

Bored Stupid

In rare cases people can up and do something stupid out of pure boredom. The ultimate case of this involves one Michael Vick. Now, what the hell is wrong with this man? What was he thinking? Football star. He's got commercials running every five minutes. How in the hell is he sittin' in his Jacuzzi with three Playboy bunnies, sipping champagne, Ludacris bumping on the sound system, and he says, "Hold up . . . I think I wanna see a couple of dogs eat each other"? Are you kidding me, Mike? Hell, you got the money! You could build

two robot dogs and make 'em fight!

But that money is long gone. Those lawyers took it. Government fined him pretty good. And you know PETA worked him over too. You so much as blink at a billy goat, PETA's gonna come for you. But people love their pets. You know, O. J. Simpson called Vick when it happened and said, "You messed up, Mike. You can't go after no dogs." He'd have come out better killing another person. Yeah, I said it.

Mike Vick made another mistake when he asked if he could have a dog again. Really, Mike? I think it's a smart move to keep you as far away from dogs as possible. Matter of fact, if "Atomic Dog" comes on the radio, he'd better change the station. If he's driving toward a Nathan's, make a left. No Snoop Dogg, no Deputy Dog. If he's going through the airport he'd better make sure TSA has a drug-sniffing cat up in there. I don't even want Mike driving past a Korean restaurant.

But seriously, I'm glad to see Mike getting a second chance. We all deserve one of those. Well, except maybe for Mel Gibson. That guy used up his chances. What the hell is wrong with that man? Mad Max is madder than me thought. That man's mouth is a lethal weapon. He's gone after Jews, Latinos, African Americans. He's lucky he doesn't have Danny Glover's sock in his ass.

But I'll be honest with you people. I think Mike and Mel are onto something. They have both perfectly demonstrated one of my most controversial pieces of advice:

If You Go Stupid, Go All-the-Way Stupid

Once it's too late and you're already doing something stupid, really swing for the fences. Hell, you're already in stupid territory, make it one for the record books. Make the situation

so damned bad that you'll never forget it next time. That's right: you'll actually wind up smarter in the long run.

You been pulled over for driving drunk? Punch that cop right in the lips. Make it a night to remember, Jack! Tasers, holding tank, courtroom, a little jail time maybe? The whole enchilada. You'll remember the next time.

You jump out onto the field in the middle of a baseball game? Don't stop there. Take your damned clothes off. Run straight for A-Rod and give him a big, sloppy kiss. Sometimes you've got to hit rock bottom before you build yourself up. And those folks in prison are going to love rockin' your bottom.

You mess up and tell someone a secret? Don't stop there. Let all that crap out. "Uncle Shawn is gay, and Darrell is cheating on Tasha, and I took forty dollars and a Life Saver from your purse, and I killed a man in Maine last fall . . ." Let all that crap out of the closet, so there won't be anything left next time you decide to open your trap.

You forget your mama's birthday? Man, you'd better make up for that. Flowers. Chocolates. Whatever it takes. That's your mama, after all.



Reinforcing These Lessons

Now, I'm not doubting that you're paying attention to the pearls of wisdom that are shooting out of these pages like BBs of truth and goodness, but just to make sure, you need to put your money where your mouth is.

Make a Stupid Jar

This is the idea that will single-handedly make the United States the smartest country on the planet. You're welcome, America. Everyone, set up a stupid jar. Stupid jars all around, people! Just like a swear jar, only you put money in every time you catch yourself doing something stupid.

Lock your keys in the car? Dollar in the stupid jar. You put your left shoe on the right foot? Two dollars in the stupid jar. You drop your cell phone in the urinal, mid-pee? That's good for five dollars right there. I know some of you folks are going to fill this jar up in a hurry!

Now, here's where it would get interesting. At the end of each week you take that money out of the stupid jar and give it to the smartest person you know. Hell, no, you don't get to keep it! That would only reward your stupidity. Nah, give that cheddar to a smart person.

Think about it. Under the Wallace Stupid Jar System, the smarter you are, the more people will just walk up and hand you money. You think people wouldn't wise the hell up quick if there was cash on the line? Imagine that: an entire financial-reward system based on not being stupid. SAT scores would go through the roof. No more dumbasses trying like hell to break into their own Buicks with wire hangers. No more reptiles swimming around with arms in their mouths. No more people trying to teach killer whales to play the

damned kazoo. Heaven on Earth is within our reach, people!

The Stupid Summary

As stated up front, stupidity is as old as time. My little book ain't going to end it, either. But perhaps, if I've done my job right, one or two of y'all will think twice before shaving with a Ginsu knife, or firing a slingshot in the wrong direction, or hauling off and punching a wall.

I saw a friend of mine the other day walking around with a cast on his hand. I asked him what happened. He handed me his stupid jar and walked away.

CHAPTER

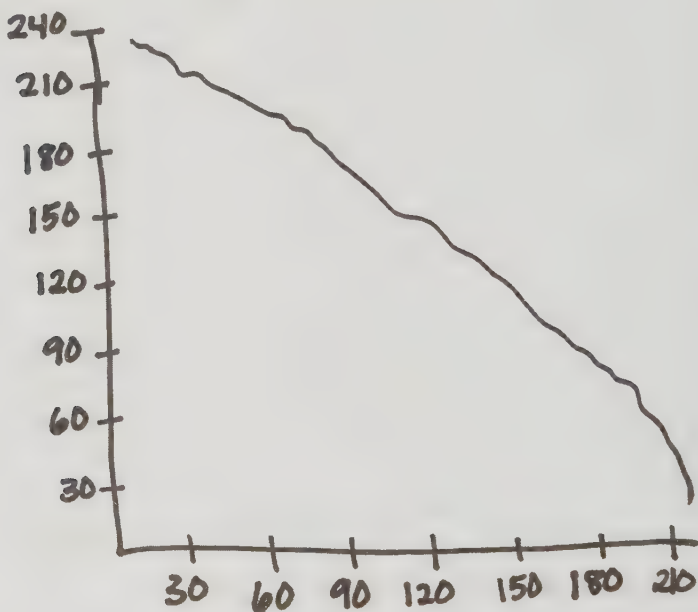
6

YOU KNOW YOU AIN'T GOT NO DAMNED SHIITAKE
MUSHROOMS IN YOUR HOUSE.

Who are these people who watch the Food Network all day long? Am I talking about you? How many of you actually cook those meals? Are you making fennel salad with seared sea bass, almond foam, and a tangerine reduction this evening? You know you ain't got no damned shiitake mushrooms in your house.

You're probably making Hot Pockets.

*Time spent
actually cooking*



*Time spent sitting there
watching people cook on
Television*

But why not go get those ingredients and fire up the stove? What's stopping you? I notice more and more that folks are experiencing things secondhand. I've got news for you. Just because you sit on your couch and watch someone on TV climb the Great Pyramid of Giza, that doesn't mean you've been there. So why aren't you sitting on top of a pyramid right now, frying up some quail eggs with truffle oil? You're probably in the fishbowl.

The Fishbowl

A fishbowl can be a comfy place. Nice and cozy. The fish knows exactly where the walls are. It cruises ten inches this way, turns around, ten inches the other way. Nice, simple routine. Maybe there's a plastic treasure chest in there too. Some colorful pebbles. The longer that fish is in that bowl, the more it becomes the entirety of its life. And that can actually become pretty comfortable.

The flip side? When you're in the fishbowl, everything on the outside of that bowl starts to become more and more foreign. Talking to people outside of that bowl starts to seem awkward. Going places outside of that bowl makes you feel off balance. Experiencing things outside of it makes you feel adrift. Ultimately, that bowl can start to limit your growth. Worse still, it can limit your happiness.

So we're about to look at some ways to break out of that bowl, or at least throw a little ladder over the edge so you can climb out from time to time. George has handcrafted five steps to help you break free.

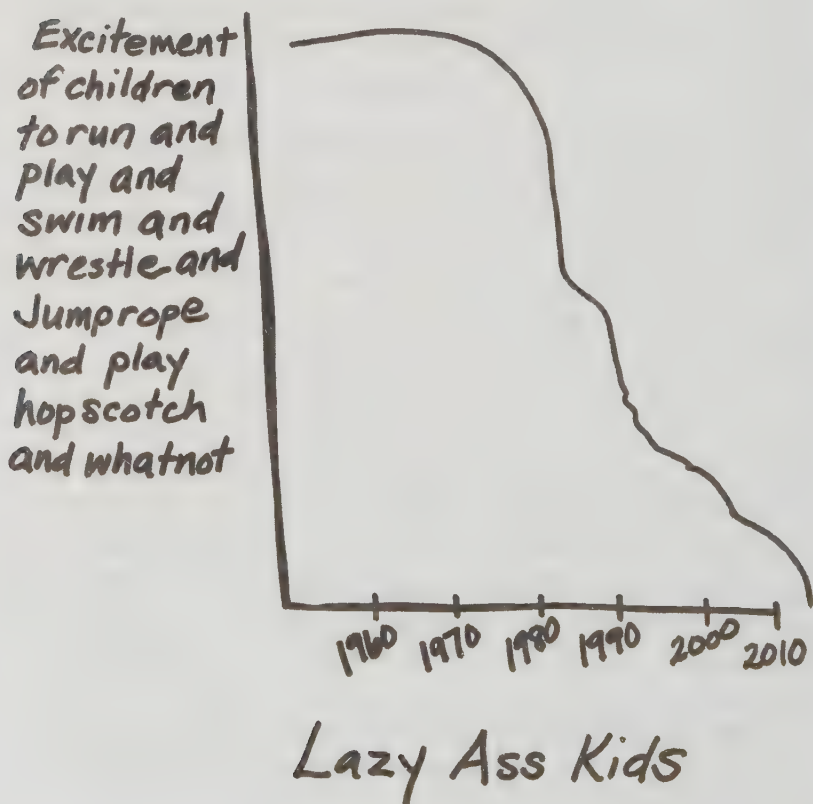
Step 1 – Open the Door and Walk Outside

Sounds simple enough, but people do it less now than ever. Air conditioning, video games, TV, have all cut into the time we actually spend outside. Jerry Springer, Judge Judy, Nancy Grace. What's wrong with Nancy Grace, anyway? Have you noticed that gleam in her eye every time someone gets kidnapped or killed? I think she might be doing it. You laugh now, but you won't when they start digging up the bodies in her garden.

At any rate, all of these things have kept us glued to our couches. This in turn cuts into the time we spend interacting

with the neighbors. Which in turn makes neighborhoods less . . . well . . . neighborhood-ish. How have we let this happen? When I was a kid, our folks used to have to force us back inside. We were on bikes, on skates, playing ball and hopscotch. Jumping rope. We had to come back in when the streetlights came on. Remember that? If you weren't home, you were getting dragged home.

It's the exact opposite nowadays. Mom's got to pry the video game controller out of Junior's hands and kick his little behind onto the lawn. The little bastard tries to climb back in through the windows while Dad swats him away with a broom.



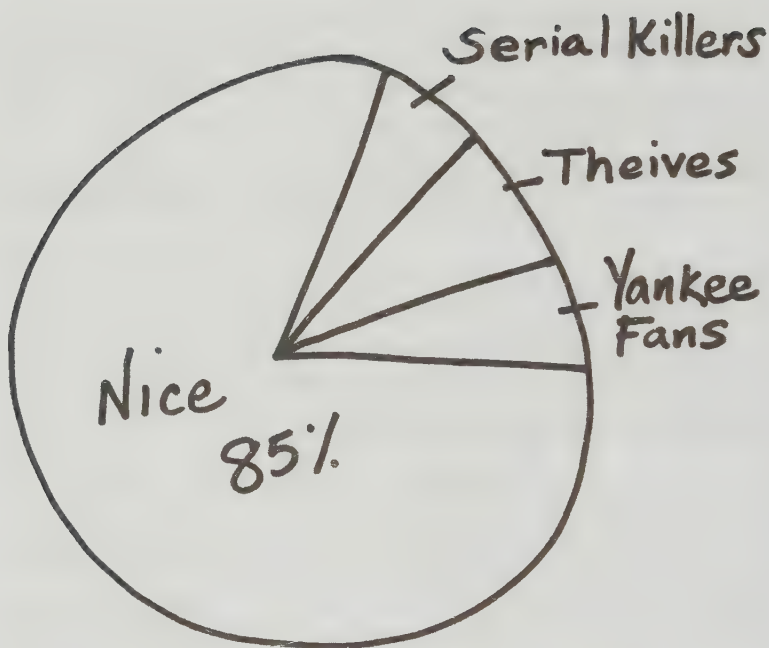
But I'm not going to sit here and just blame TV and video games. There are plenty of parents setting the example, sitting in the dark eating Cheetos and watching PX-90 infomercials. Kids see you doing that, and they learn from you. Yep, we're even starting our kids' lives in the fishbowl. It's a crying shame too, 'cause they'll keep a lot of these behaviors into adulthood.

So open up that door and get some fresh air. Turn off the TV and the Grand Theft Auto, riding around shooting people and stealing cars. What in the world happened to Pac-Man? Get your butt down the front stoop and meet the day. More importantly, meet your neighbors.

Around 1981 people stopped saying hello to each other. Just something I noticed. People stopped waving to strangers too. I also noticed a steep drop-off in people saying "please" and "thank you." Is there any such word as "manners" anymore? Where have those gone? I think it all fell apart when Mork and Mindy got canceled, though I haven't done any detailed studies on it yet. At any rate, that's when it started.

The social networking thing hasn't helped. I mean, sure, I now know what my Cousin Naggy's eating for dinner, 'cause the nut job tweets about it, but we now spend even less time around actual human beings. Just because you've read someone's Facebook status doesn't mean you're truly in touch with that person. Is it really a substitute for breaking bread together or the simple acknowledgement of a face-to-face handshake?

It's a real shame how distant we've become to one another. Why? Because, like it or not, despite a few bad apples, people are good.



Disposition of people you randomly meet in public

People are good. People are nice. People have stories to share, and some people even share your story. I promise that you will be glad if you start looking folks in the eye and saying hello. Step outside of your house and look for the first stranger you see. Gather your courage. If you've been kickin' it in the fishbowl for a while, this might feel strange. Take a deep breath and approach that person.

Now, people may be startled by a stranger greeting them. We dropped this practice decades ago, but I swear we can get it back. Make sure your fly is up and that you have no mysterious stains on your person. Calmly approach them and say hello. Once the target realizes that you are (a) not crazy, (b) not going to kill them, and (c) not selling anything, I bet they will return the greeting.

Heck, an introduction may follow. Perhaps even a conversation. You will be well on your way to adding a friend. Rinse and repeat. Your neighborhood is full of good folks who have learned not to reach out. Next thing you know, more people may be saying hello to each other. Your one small step could have an amazing domino effect. Your neighborhood may be full of goldfish just waiting for that excuse to swim out of their comfort zones. You can free the goldfish! You can free them all, one “hello” at a time!

Step 2 – Take This Job and Shove It, till Tomorrow

Nothing, and I mean nothing, can keep you locked in the fishbowl like a nine-to-five job. Hundreds of millions of us get up in the morning, commute to work, commute back, watch TV, go to sleep. That’s how it goes, like clockwork, five out of seven days. If you are stuck in this routine, there is some good news. You’ve probably got a few sick days saved up.

Take a day off. Make some crap up. Tell them you’ve got restless leg syndrome or something. Or lactose intolerance. What the hell is lactose intolerance? That’s a new ailment, isn’t it? You’re walking around and suddenly fire shoots out your backside. That’s the lactose. And you will smell that lactose within a twelve-mile radius of whoever’s intolerant. Tell your boss that you’ve come down with that. They won’t mind in the slightest if you stay home.

So you've secured the day off. Your job is to do one thing and one thing only: mill aimlessly around your town. Wear your pajamas, don't fix your hair up, just wander around and take a look. Go into stores you haven't been into. Every town has some dumb little museum no one's ever been in. Go into there too. Talk to the old geezers who volunteer there. There any nature trails near you? Take a hike. It doesn't have to be some three-hour Man-versus-Wild crap. Just a twenty-minute stroll, away from the cubicle, away from the to-do list, and away from that boss who keeps smirking at you like you've done something wrong.

This is a day that's about you. Remember when you were a kid, that excitement you used to feel when you were about to go on a field trip? It usually wasn't because you were going somewhere amazing. You might have been headed to a door-stop factory. But it really didn't matter that you were going to spend the day looking at a machine spit out doorstops. The break from routine is what was special.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is your field trip. This is your chance to go back to a time before you hopped into that bowl and started swimming in circles. Explore. Look around. Buy a Slushy and get brain freeze. On this day, your time is your own. Ladies and gentlemen, this is your field trip. And after you do it once, you're going to want to do it again. How many sick days do you have?

Step 3 – Don't Be "Skerred" Anymore

This is a huge one. Many of us have a main phobia that has dogged us for most of our lives. Mine is a great fear of not being funny as hell. I have successfully fought against this all of my life. For you it might be spiders, heights, or public speaking.

Perhaps the greatest step you can take toward breaking through your fishbowl is confronting that principal fear. It may be one simple fear, but believe me when I tell you that it signifies much more than that. If you can conquer what you fear most, what's to stop you from toppling every other obstacle in your life?

If you are scared of snakes, find out when the local zoo has a hands-on day. Most of them do. It's usually for kids, so either bring yours or, if you don't have a rugrat, you can just dress like a child and crash it. Make your voice real high and wear overalls; the zoo folks won't know the difference. Or ask at the closest vet school. Maybe the nearest pet store has a snake or two they'd let you handle.

Do what you have to do to get up close and personal with a big ol' snake. Preferably one of those huge ones you can wear around your neck like an eighty-pound scarf that can choke you to death in thirty seconds. It won't, of course. I'm just saying it could. Highly unlikely. But possible. I mean, the handler will be right there and should stop it. Unless the trainer's looking the other way, or checking her text messages. That's all it would take for that thing to knock you out, unhinge its jaws, and digest you. I mean, it won't. I'm just saying you can never underestimate the . . . Okay, we're losing focus here.

Get that snake around your neck, folks! Go to the top of the tallest building you can find. Join Toastmasters and start working on public speaking. Hell, get up and sing a song at an open mic night. Whatever your dominant fear, I challenge you to take that first huge step and confront it. Bring someone along with you if you'd like. Bring the whole family. Sell tickets. I don't care. This will be a defining moment in your life.

Once you've stared down this fear, start taking a look at the

smaller things that make you a little jumpy. Have you been afraid to ask for a raise that you think you deserve? Have you been too scared to ask your neighbor to stop throwing polka parties at 3 a.m.? Is there a special someone you've been wanting to ask on a date? You can do these things. You've just tackled the biggest fear you've got. Now the trick is making a habit of it.

The five perfectly okay FEARS

warning: if you suffer from any of the following fears that's completely okay. Please do not attempt to face them. George Wallace bears no liability if you do. - MGMT

- 1. Fear of handling explosives*
- 2. Fear of launching yourself with a giant catapult*
- 3. Fear of eating burritos full of poison*
- 4. Fear of hitting policemen with rakes*
- 5. Fear of driving a golf cart into a volcano*

Step 4 – Get the Junk Out of Your Trunks

People, put down this book right now and look in your closets. Check your attics, your basements, your cubbyholes. How many things are in there that you never touch? How much clutter do you have around you? Don't feel bad about that NordicTrack covered in cobwebs, sitting on the back porch. You aren't alone.

You're only human, and humans, generally speaking, like stuff. We hunker down in the fishbowl and surround ourselves with things that make us feel comfortable. But lots of times those things are more familiar than they are useful. We've all kept something around for the sole purpose of keeping that thing around. Well, I'm going to ask you to be harder on yourself.

Go through your stuff and start asking yourself not what you want, but what you need. I'd bet there's a lot more in the "want" pile than the "need" pile. If it isn't helping you move forward, it's holding you back. If it isn't serving a purpose, it's outlived its usefulness. If you haven't used it, you won't miss it. It's time to take that Snuggie your Aunt Besma sent you for Easter and pack that fuzzy thing up. Your Gutbuster. Your Topsy Turvy. Colon Cleanser. Chia Pet. Bamboo steamer. Box 'em all up. It's time to go!

So here's what you do. That pile of crap you don't need? You're going to shove it in your yard on a Saturday morning and sell it. Better yet, you're going to sell it to folks who actually need it. Even better than that, you're going to meet about 500 strangers from around the neighborhood. (Remember, now, make sure your fly is up, and no suspicious stains on your person.) This is your chance to work on this step and step 1 at the exact same time. Hell, bring a snake and wear it

around your neck. Let's hit that step too, while we're at it.

When you look up, you're going to have decluttered a little bit of your home and a little bit of your life too. You're also going to have a little bit of cash, which will come in handy on our fifth and final step—you're going to give what hasn't been bought to a deserving charity. And most importantly, you will have pawned that Snuggie off on some other poor soul.

Step 5 – Flee the Country

I know some folks who have never left the county. Yes, I realize I didn't put an "r" in there. I mean the county. Like, Fayette County. Polk County. Macon County. There are people who never venture more than a few miles from their front stoops. No disrespect to these good folks. I am certain that their stoops are among the most comfortable stoops known to man. But you know what? There's an amazing world out there.

I've been from one end of this planet to the other, and there is no substitute for it. I've been on the Great Wall. I've been to Buckingham Palace. I've seen the untouched beauty of the Milwaukee suburbs. True, I've been blessed, but even before I had a foothold in show business I had scraped my way through a boatload of countries.

We used to pull together all the cash we had, drop it on the counter at JFK airport, and ask what their cheapest international fare was. It didn't matter where we were headed. Every place has a story to tell. Every place would be an experience. Every trip we took, disastrous or not, became an indelible part of who we were.

Remember that chunk of change you made on the front lawn, selling your crap to people? That's your down payment on your next (maybe even first) trip out of the country. Hell,

if you had a few NordicTracks you may already have enough to buy a ticket or two. It's never been easier. Get a passport, check the Internet fares, and book it. I don't care if you don't know a darned thing about the place. Just go. I promise you will not be sorry.

Seeing this world is crucial, especially if you're a young person. People have life backwards. Why is it that we retire, then we decide we want to go see the Amazon? After sixty-five, you're too damned old. Those anacondas are going to eat you and your walker with one swallow. You're going to be in Rio, fast asleep at 7:30 p.m., when everyone else is just waking up to go out on the town. Get out there on this planet and turn some heads while you're young.

You only get one go-round on this big marble. You might as well get to know it better. When you travel you get a sense not just of the limitless destinations in this amazing world but also of the endless possibilities for you in your life. It confirms the idea that there is a world beyond us. There is a world that dwarfs our puny little fishbowls, and it's ours as much as anyone else's.

The Possibilities

They are just five steps, but they could make a world of difference. Give them a try. Open yourself to the people around you. Free yourself from the routines that control you. Fight through the fears that are holding you back. Free yourself from the clutter you keep around for no good reason other than that Uncle Ike gave you some of it. And lastly, experience this big old world to its fullest.

It has more to offer than you can ever imagine—shiitake mushrooms included.

CHAPTER

7

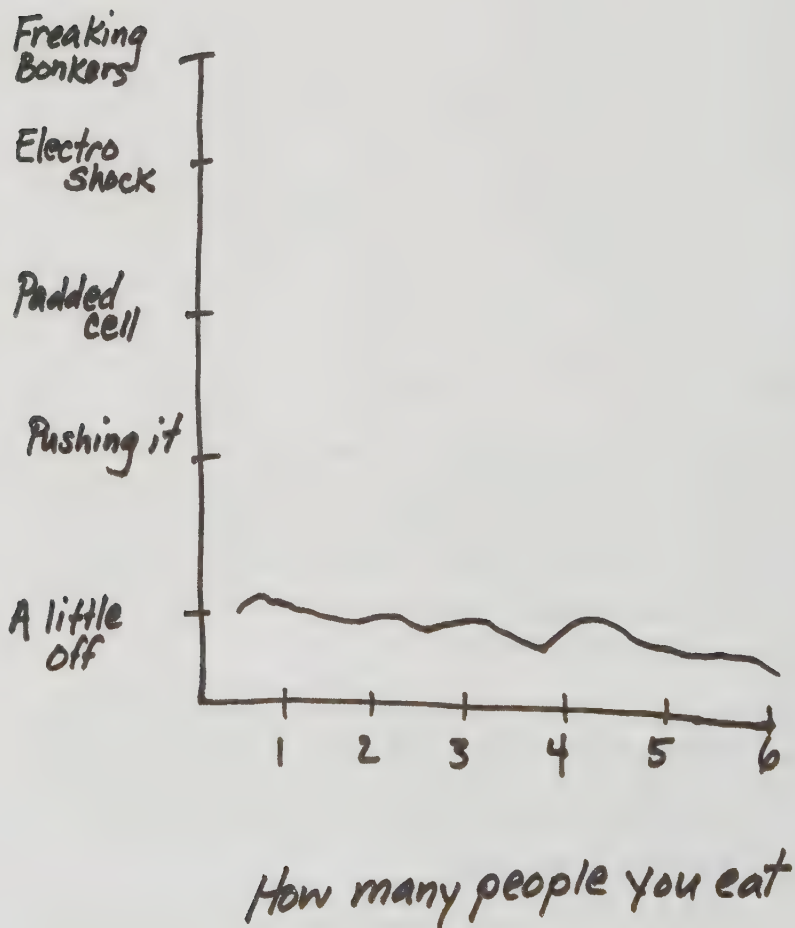
WE DON'T NEED TWO VIRGINIAS

It's hard to keep your chin up sometimes, when the world around you seems like it's falling apart. I admit, there is some wild stuff happening. Men marrying each other on top of mosques at Ground Zero. People carrying machine guns at tea parties, telling the president to go back to Kenya. People, we aren't in Kansas anymore.

I know there is a lot of foolishness going on, the world over. And I love the United States of America as much as anybody, but we are the epicenter of crazy. And the epicenter of that epicenter is a little place called Washington, D.C. Allow me one or two (or twelve) rants.

How did the government spend three million dollars trying to find out if Jeffrey Dahmer was crazy? Three million dollars! Let me tell you something, when I'm president I will make

one very simple law. Anytime you eat three or more people, you're crazy! Case closed. The first time you might just be a little curious. Maybe the second time you're trying to perfect it—some A-1 sauce, a little Mrs. Dash. But three people? You got to go!



And how come the first thing we do when we lock killers up is put them on suicide watch? Why? When I'm president we're gonna hand these guys a belt, a razorblade, and a three-legged chair and say, "Do the right thing." And we're gonna cut costs on Death Row. No fancy electric chairs. You kill some folks, we're gonna throw you in a tub and toss in a toaster. Hook it up to The Clapper. I'll clap your ass on and clap your ass off.

Those folks in prison have got it pretty good, don't they? How come the inmates get free health care and we don't? Shoot, I tore my Achilles' tendon last year, went straight to the mall and started shoplifting. I had to get into prison ASAP. Did two weeks in the pen, got free room and board, fixed up my leg. I saved \$70,000 in the deal. And they let me keep the bras I stole too.

That prison hospital was nicer than the Mayo Clinic. Gave me a tattoo while they took my blood pressure. No one knows what the heck is going on in these hospitals today. Medical costs are out of control. And how in the hell is everyone getting a free scooter? Old people, fat people, babies, all riding around on electric scooters. Who's paying for that? You know we are. You've seen the commercials for it, right? "Get a free scooter. Never have to walk again. Yay." And these folks have the nerve to get on TV and brag about it? Get your lazy behinds out of those scooters, people!

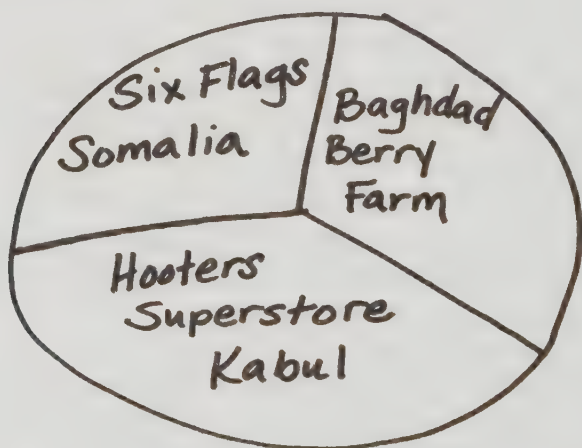
But all that medical spending is nothing compared to the military. Ooooh, we can blow some stuff up, can't we? We are ready for you. Stealth drones and laser-guided smart weapons? I'm waiting for the Death Star to pull up.

This military spending is out of control. We're dropping hundreds of billions on these bombers. The B-2, the B-3. What was wrong with the bombers we had B-4? All these

people we've been bombing over the years, have they been complaining? The bombs have been running late or something? People sitting around, looking at the clock. "Wonder what time the bombs are gonna get here?"

And what's this Tomb of the Unknown Soldier? Every holiday we put wreaths on it. Memorial Day, Labor Day, Arbor Day. How many millions of dollars have we spent on these flowers? Why don't they open that tomb and find out who the hell this guy is?

But God bless the men and women in uniform. They're making the biggest sacrifice of all. They go where Uncle Sam tells 'em to go, and they don't complain about it either. But I gotta say, every time we blow up a country, what's the first thing we do? Build it right back up.

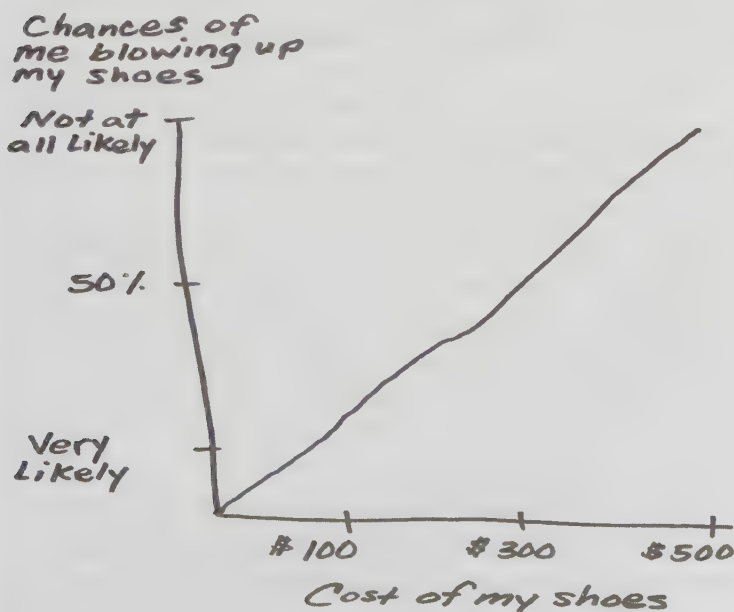


*Biggest Waste of
Taxpayers Money,
Worldwide*

And if we're not blowing up and rebuilding these countries, we're loaning them billions of dollars. Most of the time they can't even pay it back. Or the king flies over here, gives the president a zebra rug, and we forgive the debt. Let me tell you something, if I lend you twenty bucks, I might say, "Don't worry about it, man." But if I lend you thirty billion? You're paying me back, you can believe that. I'll throw some cement shoes on your borrowing behind and toss you in the Los Angeles River. It ain't but seven inches deep, but I'll do it.

And the names of these places. Bosnia, Herze . . . Herzi . . . Hersig . . . Matter of fact, if we can't pronounce your name, you ain't getting diddly squat. Go ask Uzbekistan for some rubles or whatever money it is they use.

I went to Bosnia last week. Had to fly for twenty-nine hours. I don't know about you, but the TSA drives me crazy. They've got me taking my shoes off every time I fly. I spent \$500 on these shoes, you think I'm gonna blow 'em up?



Remember that shoe bomber? What a lousy terrorist he was. Don't get me wrong, I'm glad he was so dumb. But this man actually made it onto a crowded jumbo jet with a bomb in his shoes. All he had to do was light it. Now, he could step into the bathroom and do this in private, or he could sit there in the cabin, strike a damned match, and try to light his Hush Puppies in front of 200 pissed-off Americans. That man got his butt kicked from the cockpit to the rudder. Amen to that.

And who was this underwear bomber? The explosives malfunctioned, thank the Lord. If I was president, the punishment for this guy would be simple. I'd hand that underwear to him. "Put 'em back on. Those tightie whities are going to work this time, Jack." Fruit of the boom!

So because of all these crazy people the TSA is kicking our behinds. They're searching my bag, messing everything up, unfolding my clothes. Can't even close the suitcase when they're done. That's why now I put all my dirty drawers on top. Wait till you get a whiff of this. I've got a bomb for you. And I'm lactose intolerant. Take that, Inspector #22.

But it ain't all bad at the airport. They've got those new machines you can just walk through. Don't have to take anything out of your pockets, or take your shoes off.

It looks right through your person. Some people don't like it. They think it's an invasion of privacy. Didn't bother me. I walked through, found out I had a ruptured spleen, two slipped discs, and an enlarged prostate. I was heading to the doctor, so I asked 'em, "Can I get a copy of this?" Saved me \$2,800.

And they need to bring back smoking on these airplanes. I was one of the first people who said we should get rid of smoking on planes. But I had no idea what that smoke was

covering up. I'll tell you what, people are releasing some odors on these planes. You ever been reading a magazine or a newspaper on a plane, and all of a sudden out of nowhere comes a smell that would set off a smoke detector? Everyone's looking at me like I did it.

And I did do it.

That TSA has got me driving places instead. I had to get from Atlanta to Akron last month, drove for about ninety-three hours. I made it through Virginia, you believe they dumped me right into another Virginia? Why, pray tell, do we need two Virginias? Double the capital buildings, double the courts, double the state employees, double everything. When I'm president I'm going to mash these states together. We don't need two Carolinas. We for damned sure don't need two Dakotas. Ain't but fifty people live there.

We would save some money if I was president. What do we have, five Great Lakes? I'll sell one of 'em. They ain't all that great. We'll have a garage sale and get rid of Lake Huron. No one knows where that one is anyhow.

You know what else the government did? They spent millions widening the doors on buses and installing an elevator so people on wheelchairs can get on. They spent \$100,000 per bus. I say get a rope, hook their behinds up to the back of the bus. "Sir, you can just let go when we reach your stop." I'm not afraid to say what everyone's thinking. Although you won't hear me say a damned thing about a postal worker.

What is wrong with those people? First off, folks at the post office are on a power trip. Did you know it's a federal offense to harm a government employee? That's why on Christmas or Mother's Day, when you hand 'em that box marked "FRAGILE," they take out that big old rubber stamp. Bam! Bam!

Bam! Bam!

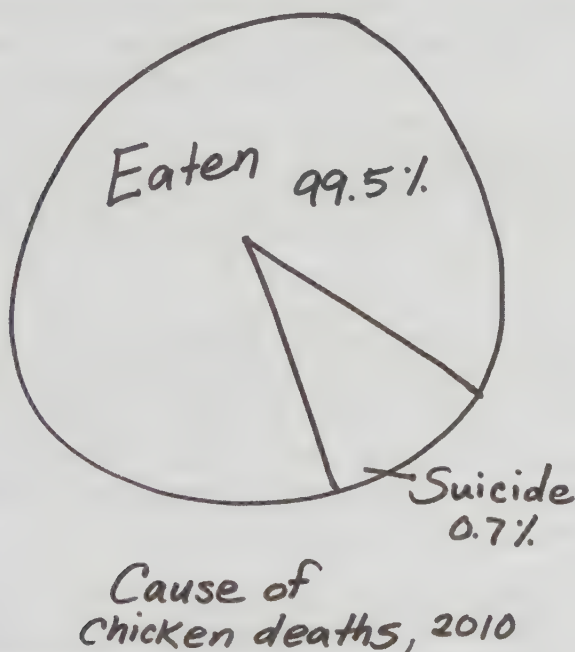
But the main thing is that they're insane. Every last one of them. How come you mailmen and women can't just lose your job or quit, then go away like everyone else? Postal workers always gotta come back with three Uzis and a machete. I went in the post office last week. They had the employee of the month on one wall and a guy wanted for murder on the other. Same picture. I'm gonna mind my manners when I'm in that place. I'll pay my ten dollars a stamp and get the hell on, with a smile. "Y'all have a good day now, ya hear?"

It's getting scary out there. Everyone has a gun. Hunters are on Capitol Hill, saying they need armor-piercing bullets. But I haven't seen any deer wearing Kevlar lately, have you? Is Bambi rolling in a Sherman tank now? They making bulletproof vests for rabbits? People will shoot anything, though. Who are these people who go to Africa? The big-game hunters? "I'm going to go see the magnificent giraffe in its natural habitat, then hammer one to the wall of my den, right next to the singing bass my sister bought me for Christmas." These people are sick.

Then the government spent something like three million dollars trying to figure out how many white rhinos there were left in the world. Found twenty-nine of 'em standing there. Now what the hell do I care how many rhinos there are? On the other hand, if they found out there were only fifteen chickens left, we'd have a major problem on our hands. "What can I do to chip in on this research?" I love me some chicken. I'm not afraid to say it. Even when I was born, my mother went to breastfeed me and I told her, "You get that tittie outta my face and go get me some chicken!"

A chicken has a bad life, doesn't it? Of all the animals in

this world, a chicken is the only one that never dies of natural causes. Never ever. The second a chicken hatches, it knows somebody is after it, Jack. It steps out of that egg, we're standing around it with bibs on. Go take a drive down the road, you'll see all kinds of animals run over. Dogs, deer, skunks. Ever seen a chicken laying there? Didn't think so. They're between two buns over at Chick-fil-A.



A chicken has no chance at all. Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide. That's why the chicken crossed the road. That little guy was going kamikaze. "You won't see me at Hooters, suckers!"

But don't get me going on people acting like they're going to commit suicide. You wanna get up there and jump? Get up there and jump! What's this whole song and dance with the cops and the firemen? A therapist's standing on the street with

a megaphone, asking you about your daddy issues. This is on the taxpayers' dime, buddy. Just jump and we'll only need two folks there, a coroner and a street sweeper. You go through all that trouble to climb the Golden Gate? You're jumping. You're on top of the Empire State Building? You're coming down the hard way, and we'll give you some Windex and rags on the way down.

Yeah, the fire department's always there, with that big tram-poline. That person jumps, they're gonna bounce up twice as high as they were. But really, firefighters, y'all are heroes. No doubt. But why in the hell don't you park by the fire hydrants? We can't park by those things, so you can. And why don't you put a back door on your garages so you can just drive around, instead of blocking traffic for ten minutes while you back that sucker in?

And every time so much as a dumpster catches on fire, that fire engine's parked diagonally in the middle of the street. Could be just a lit cigarette laying on the curb—that truck is lengthwise, taking up as much space as humanly possible. Traffic's backed up for twelve city blocks while three firemen are dousing a pack of Kools.

But people get down on government a little too much as well. People were saying, "Obama's not doing enough to stop the oil spill in the gulf." Well, that crap was happening a mile under water. He's not Flipper. What, you want him to throw on some SCUBA gear and swim down there with a Sham-Wow!? You want him to talk to his dolphin friends and have them plug it up with their bottlenoses? He's the president, not Aquaman.

Let's remember that these people are all human. You think the Secretary of Education doesn't misspell words? You think

the Secretary of Foreign Affairs never told an ethnic joke?
Everyone's done something, you know?

The Secret to Ignoring All This Crap

First, let me say, "You've got to vote." Gotta support what you believe in. And people gave up their lives to get us all that right. Get in that booth and do your thing. But once those people are off in Washington counting rhinos, don't let them ruin your day. Once your governor is in his mansion handing scooters to people, laugh it off.

I want you to work on something. If you find yourself routinely getting pissed off about anything more than ten miles from your front door, let it go. You can't control that mess.

Our communities are under our control. We can decide whether or not we have our neighbors over for dinner. Our July Fourth block parties. Our Little League games. Our houses of worship. Our family reunions. Revel in these things, and you will find yourself smiling.

I don't care if you're a big, fat elephant or a complete jack-ass, we all bleed the same. Someone passes, we all show up with food. Someone's car breaks down, we're there with jumper cables. Face to face, we can put these differences aside.

Always remember, there's a lot more that unites us than divides us.

CHAPTER

8

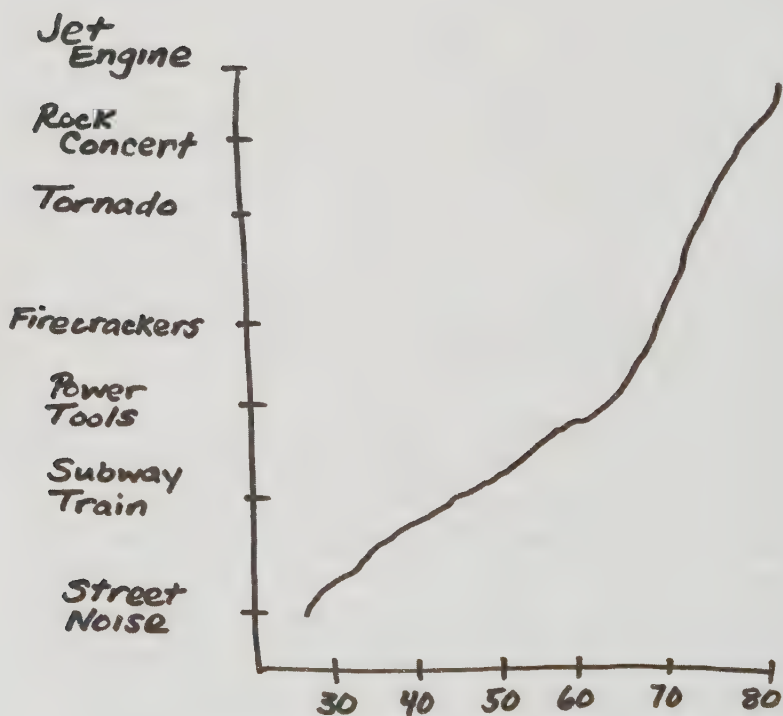
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN YOUNG AT HEART. IT'S THE 77
OTHER ORGANS I'M WORRIED ABOUT.

I've always been a high-energy person when I'm not sleeping or taking one of my several naps a day. Actually, I'm proud to take after Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, and other famous power nappers. But whenever I've been conscious I've tried to take on life with a skip in my step. I was that way as a young man, and I stayed that way as an adult. But I remember it like it was yesterday—that fateful moment, the exact second when middle age made its debut in my life. It was the first time I grunted when I stood up.

That's right. A grunt. A simple little grunt, right? No big deal? But I knew right away it was more than that. I had heard that grunt many times before, and always from someone with an AARP card. It was the grunt of someone getting up from the bingo table or leaning down to pick up a set of dentures. It

was the grunt.

Soon my legs joined the chorus. Every time I got off the sofa my knees started sounding like a bowl of Rice Krispies. At first it was just when I'd been sitting for a while. Now my knees snap, crackle, and pop every time I so much as look at 'em.

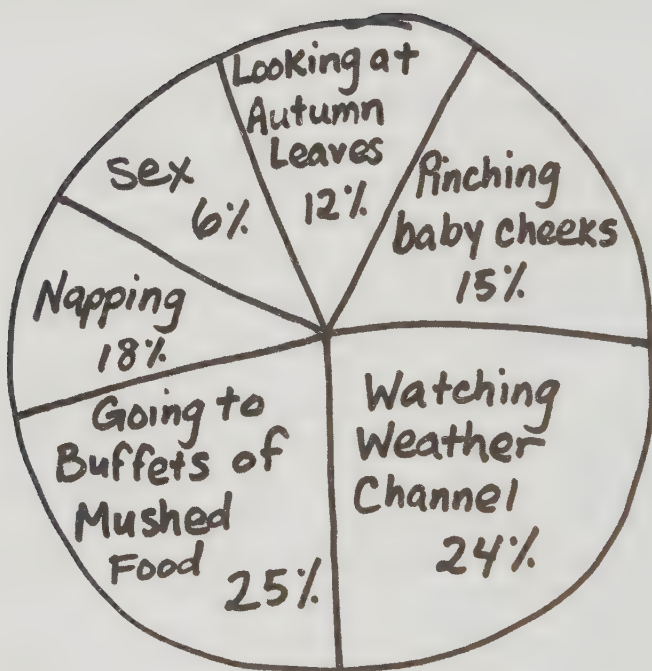


*How much noise you make
when you stand up, The older
you get.*

You reach a certain age, when you drop something, you just look at it. If you actually bend over to grab it you might never straighten yourself out again. Unless you've got a Life Alert necklace, you're screwed. Remember that? "I've fallen, and I can't get up." Don't laugh, people. It's going to happen to you someday. Hell, just last week I had to scoop my Aunt Bertha off the floor.

Now, I'm no spring chicken. I can admit it. But Aunt Bertha is a chicken at the end of a long, hot summer. She is a saggy, tired chicken. Old as the hills. She was a nurse in the the War of 1812. Thomas Edison was her electrician. When Aunt Bertha comes to funerals and trips on some uneven dirt, we just roll her into the hole. She always claws her way back out somehow. She's as tough as they come.

I'm not old yet, but my younger days are definitely in the rearview mirror. I'm not on the shuffleboard court yet, but I'm definitely peeking over the fence at it. I used to be out on the scene, up in the club, talking to a fine honey, trying to get those digits. Now I'm up in the auto club, talking to the receptionist, trying to get discount tickets for whale watching. Your priorities change in a big way. Not to mention you can no longer open plastic containers. Chips, cookies, candy bars. You can forget about opening them with your bare hands. Yesterday I had to back my car over a Milky Way to get the damned thing open.



Most pleasurable
activities, after 50

When you start getting old you're just happy to get through the day without something falling off your body. I'm at the doctor's all the time now. I have worn a path to that man's office, but there are plenty of folks in that waiting room way older than me.

These other folks, God love 'em, have one foot in the grave, the other on a banana peel. So why do they make all these good people wait an hour and a half to see the doctor? Don't you see they'll be at the pearly gates in a few days? But the people at the desk keep saying, "Be patient, be patient." That's where the title came from, you know. "MD" means "Me doctor, you be patient."

Then they have to nerve to bring you back to the exam room to trick you into thinking you're about to be seen. Trust me: you'll be waiting in that little paper robe for about fifty-three more minutes. I've started to get back at 'em. Now, when they put me in there, I start stealing crap.

They don't lock those cabinets, people. The buffet is open. I take cotton swabs, tongue depressors, anything I can get my hands on. I even take that little knee hammer so I can jump-start my mama each morning. Come over to Big George's house. The bathroom looks like a medical supply store now. I've got samples of every medication known to man. Hell, forget the doctor; I'll treat you just as well as they will. Look in your mouth, hand you some antibiotics. "That'll be \$150."

When that doctor finally walks in, it is open season on George Wallace. How come the older a man gets, the more medical stuff goes through his back door? My doctor has gotten to know me quite intimately over the last few years. Hands, thermometers, cameras— they've put it all up there. Prostate checks, hemorrhoid checks, colon-cancer checks.

Hell, last week I walked in with a runny nose and he went straight for my poop chute. He's got one hand down my throat, the other up my keister. I thought he was trying to shake hands. I wish he at least had the decency to buy me dinner.

My backside's doing all right, though. Hanging in there. But I look at the old folks I know and I don't hold out much hope. The first thing to go on these people is their ability to keep their gas to themselves. My Uncle Bo was a walking whoopee cushion. If he moved a muscle he farted. God help you if you were walking behind him. All that mashed food he was eating didn't hold up too well. Uncle Bo started to wander the neighborhood late in life. Luckily we could just follow the sounds and track him down. If that didn't work, we could follow the smell and bring him on home.

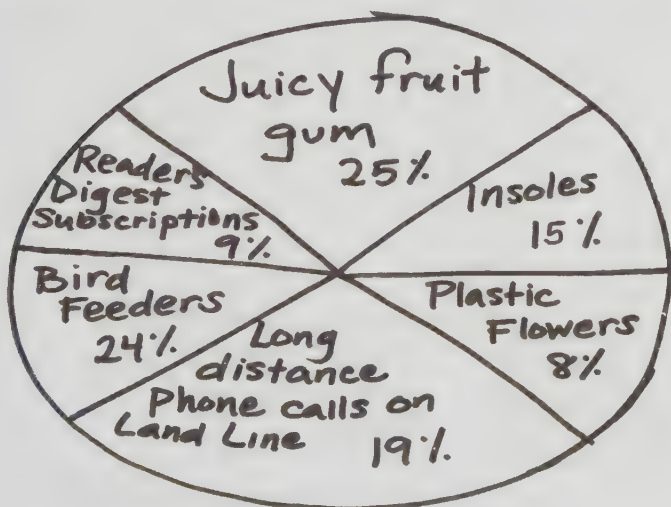
He used to blow up that bathroom too. When he was done we had to throw a termite tent on it. The whole john was in shambles. Had to call up Roto Rooter, the Orkin Man, Ghostbusters. To this day, when I hear his name mentioned I can smell the Lysol.

I do need to get a counterfeit handicapped parking sticker for my car, though. I could pull it off. Park right in front of Best Buy and limp in like the Hunchback of Notre Dame, or with a nice, solid pimp strut. Have you seen those wide-open spots right in front of every store in America? It would be worth it. I'll wear a neck brace and drag a club foot behind me for those spots. You might laugh at me in the TV aisle, but your ass won't be laughing when you're walking two miles to your parking spot. And all I had to do was walk like a pimp for a few minutes.

Funny how that happens. You spend your whole life trying

to look sharp. Once the wheels start to come off, all fashion sense goes out the damned window, doesn't it? When I'm an old man, I don't care if I'm wearing lime-green Hush Puppies with lifts in 'em—if my corns don't hurt, I will wear those ugly-ass shoes till the soles fall off. Next comes the fanny pack, 'cause if your belongings aren't fastened around your waist you will lose them, guaranteed. Then you start walking around with one of those walkers with the tennis balls on the bottom.

People, can we please buy old folks something else to put on the bottom of their walkers? They deserve better, don't you agree? You know those people who run out onto tennis courts and grab the balls? Those are senior citizens trying to fix their broke-ass walkers. Security tases 'em once the cameras turn away. That's what John McEnroe was always yelling about. It's a tragedy.

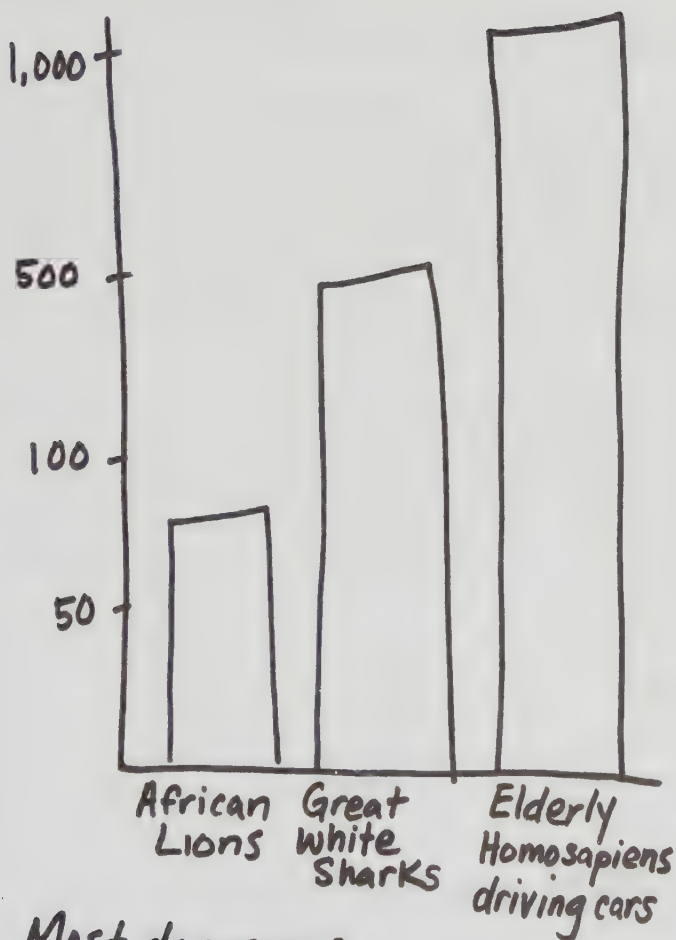


*What old folks spend
their money on*

Old people have it rough. It's stressful, forgetting things all the time. Looking for their eyeglasses for three hours, then finding them on their heads. They go a little crazy, end up with fourteen cats or collecting figurines or something. Old folks love cats and figurines. No doubt. Every neighborhood has a few cat ladies. And there are always some old folks with 10,000 figurines. Our cat lady was named Weezy. She had fourteen cats, and all but three of them had their own tiny figurine collections. Just crazy.

Old folks can't see anything. I can't see so well nowadays either. Yesterday I thought my dog was the housekeeper. Asked it to make the bed and left it a twenty-dollar tip. Old people can't see a thing, and that makes it extra dangerous when they're driving, swerving back and forth, guessing where the road is. Scary.

Attacks per
Year

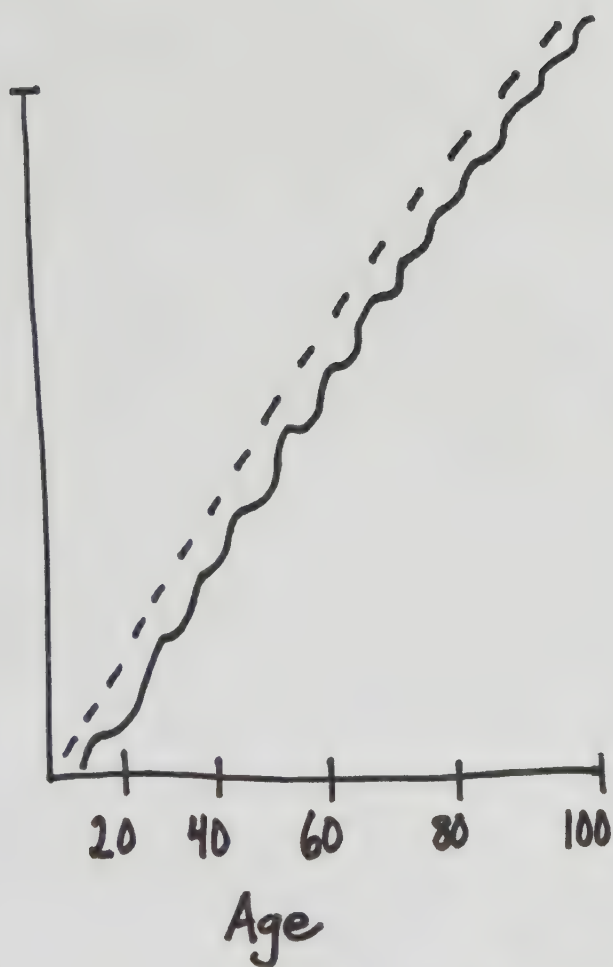


Most dangerous
Animals in the world

What's worse is they all drive cars from the 1970s. I'll tell you what, in the '70s they made cars out of pure lead. Those things are tanks. Hell, worse than tanks. The Army left the tanks at home and invaded Iraq in a fleet of Dodge Darts. That's a deadly weapon in the hands of a ninety-seven-year-old lady with a beehive. She can take out an entire city block on her way to the Relax the Back store.

Have you seen those stores? Relax the Back? Sit n' Sleep? I used to drive right past those places. Now I slow down. "I wonder what they've got to put under my neck." And they've got vibrating chairs in every color. I love those things. I've got those chairs in every room. Big George has got vibrating everything. Walls, doors, appliances. You sit, stand, or lie down in my house, something's going to massage your ass.

Getting older is strange. You're getting wiser and wiser, but there's more and more crap you don't understand. My neighbor knows the meaning of life but can't work a microwave. My Aunt Winnie is the smartest lady I know. She tried Facebook for three days, got poked three times, then deleted her account.



----- = Amount of priceless wisdom
you have

~~~~~ = Inability to operate a cell phone

This world has changed so much. It makes me dizzy. When the hell did people start putting microchips in their dogs? When I was younger all they got was table scraps. Maybe kibble, with some bits thrown in if it was a good month. I don't get it. But dogs are great. I'm in pretty good shape right now, but I still apply for a service dog every week. I want one of those service dogs, big time. They'll get you drinks from the refrigerator, boil your pasta, everything. And all they want in return is a few doggie treats and a pat on the back? You can keep your wife. I'll take the beagle that can pick up my dry cleaning. They've got service monkeys too. I need one of those. If it's a simple Form 1040, a service monkey will complete and mail your tax return. Amazing what they can train them to do now.

There's so much that passes you by when you get older. You start becoming one of the old fogies who say, "Kids today" before every sentence. "Kids today, with their Krump music." "Kids today, with their Tweeter feeders and their Face Space." "Kids today, with their running water and motorized vehicles." And kids today are crazy. For sure.

But a lot has changed for the better, too. I remember when I couldn't drink from some water fountains. Now the president is a black man. He's so black he sneaked in from Africa and forged his birth certificate. We've seen so many changes in our lifetimes. Space travel. Heart transplants. Cher's daughter becoming a man. Who knows what's in store for the next generation?

Old folks have witnessed so much, and the time comes to hand off that same incredible journey to the young people. I'm happiest when I get to sit at my family reunion and watch the madness. All the generations, right there, together. Of course I can't remember who the hell everyone is, but that's

what nametags are for.

But in the young people you can see all the potential in the world. They have no idea what a ride they're about to go on. You can bestow as much wisdom on them as you can, but most of it they're going to have to experience for themselves. And with any luck they'll live good, long lives, like some of you already have.

If you've got a mountain of laugh lines on your face, if you've seen thousands upon thousands of sunsets in your days, if you remember when every Main Street had a pharmacy, you deserve a round of applause. A lot of folks didn't make it this far. Think about them. Everyone you've known who has passed? You've carried their memory with you. Every place you've been, you've kept it alive with every memory you've shared.

You are walking history, and you've created a long, special story that's all your own.



# **CHAPTER**

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# **9**





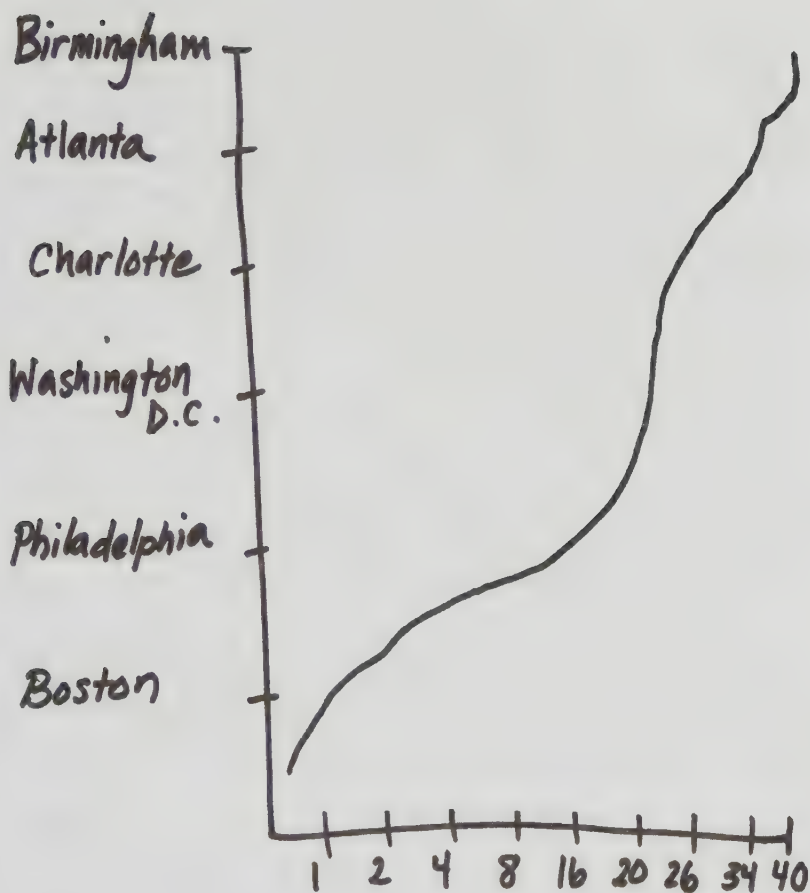
## YOU NEVER SEE THE LAST BAPTIST CHURCH.

I was in church about twenty-six hours a week growing up. I was there more than I was home. Kept a bed between the pews. The deacons read me bedtime stories, the Reverend cooked me breakfast each morning. Yes, sir, this was Atlanta, Georgia, so you know we went to church. There are a handful of things you need to see in your life: the Grand Canyon, the Great Pyramids (be sure to skip the Not-So-Great Pyramids), and a bona fide black church.

There is nothing like these churches. People singing, dancing, passing out. These places are easy to find: just follow the sound of Sam Cooke's and Aretha Franklin's voices. Yes, I will finally confirm your suspicions, right here in my book. Every black person can sing like Sam Cooke, Aretha Franklin, Alicia Keys, or James Brown. Note for note, exactly like one of 'em. If that doesn't get you in for a visit, I don't know what will.

You could also just use the Yellow Pages. In all of America there are only six black churches: Beulah Baptist, Piney Grove, China Grove, Shiloh Missionary, Mount Nebo, and Greater Mount Nebo. Why do we have to have these crazy names? The white church is First Methodist, and we're walking into the Atlanta Abyssinian Calvary Church of Mount Zion Adjacent.

Even our hymns were ridiculous. Most churches are sticking to the classics. We had some crazy songs in that church house. We used to sing one called "A Charge to Keep I Have, a God to Glorify." What in the world was that? Everyone was mumbling along, acting like they knew the lyrics. They were drilled into my impressionable head over many, many years.



Hours in church per week,  
Further South you go

Growing up in the South, you had to go to church. There was no choice in the matter. I tell you, if I never go to church again in my life, I put in my time. You might hit four or five services every Sunday. Go to your home church service; then Sunday school; morning service; 10, 12, and 2; YBCWW; BTU; choir; A&B selection. Someone's having a program across town. Then a night service later on. My mama used to come over and say, "You'd better not fall asleep." I had been dragged from the peaks of Mount Nebo to the depths of Piney Grove. It was time to take one of those Einstein naps. Twelve hours in church. It made me wonder if Jesus could just plan to be there between 7:00 and 7:15.

I'll let you in on the secret. You can waste your time looking for him in church if you want, but Jesus is in prison. Chris Tucker went to church his whole life. Where did he find Jesus? The state pen. Everyone who goes there finds Jesus. You want to meet that man, you'd better steal somebody's Chrysler.

My parents raised me in the church. I learned the commandments like the back of my hand. I learned to live right and to lean on my faith. Still, I can't say I was prepared for both of my folks to leave this world by the time I was twenty.

There is nothing like a black funeral. They last about three and a half hours. The preacher would get up there and tell the same lie he told time and time again: "I'm not gonna be long." Three hours later you're sitting there, trying to find out the score of the Falcons game without Jesus catching you. Now you can sit in the pew and watch it on your cell phone.

But oh, that preacher would lie. Even the people who say they know the deceased are lying. The next time you see a hearse parked in front of a black church, go on in. And don't feel bad about not knowing the corpse. Ninety-five percent

of those folks don't have the foggiest idea who's in that casket. They showed up for the food.

And there's some good eating at a black funeral, believe me. Someone from the Zagat guide usually shows up to review it. Bon Appétit magazine does a full-page spread. There are a whole bunch of folks feeding their feelings at a black funeral. I must have had eight tons of collards from funerals alone.

I know I went through about seven plates the day I became an orphan. Like I said, my mother and father were both gone before I made it to twenty. I can't say I understood as I sat there listening to the preacher. Was this some mistake? Why did God do this? I was at a loss. But I had no idea what the Lord had in store for me.

You know how they say God works in mysterious ways? I moved to Ohio not long after my folks passed, 'cause I had some family up there. But the family I would really find? Well, they weren't family at all. Through the church, I met the Hill family. Lawrence and Donna Hill had their own kids. They didn't have a lot of money, but they made room for me, asked me to move in, and treated me as one of their own. To this day I consider them my flesh and blood. God had delivered me to a new family, and a new mother and father.

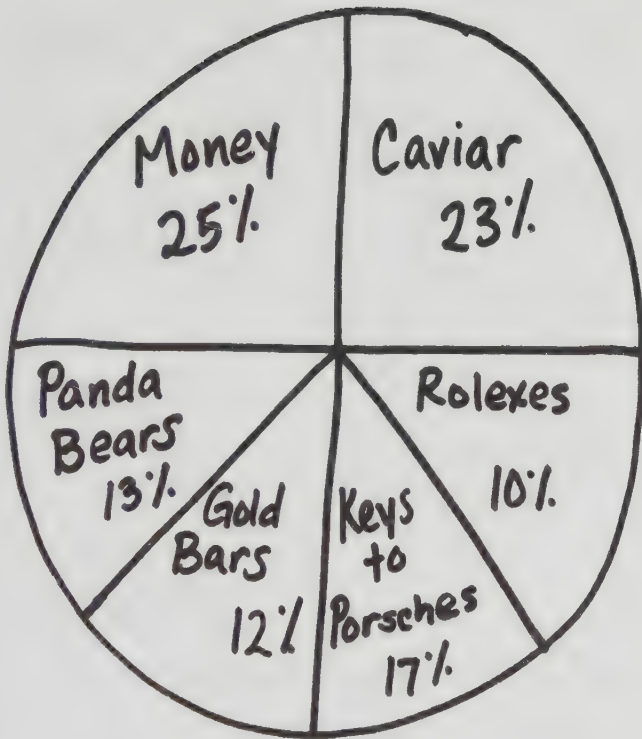
My faith has been steadfast every step of the way. God has showed me nothing but love. I am beyond blessed. I have had the privilege of spending my life on Earth making people happy. If he never gives me another thing in my life, he's done enough. I always make time to thank God for his work in my life, though I will say that my house of worship now is a lot different from the churches I saw growing up.

Nowadays I go to the West Angeles Church of God and Christ out in Southern California with the Reverend Charles

E. Blake. It's a good church, but it's a little crazy. We've got six commandments and four do-the-best-you-cans. And it's West-Coast-style all the way, so they pass out the wine, and I pass out the cheese.

There are a lot of performers at my church. Stevie Wonder goes there. That man is twenty minutes late every week, and they bring him right down front. I finally told Stevie, "You've got to quit coming in here twenty minutes late every Sunday."

I told the ushers to sit him in the back, facing the wall. He won't know the difference. And yes, I already know I'm going to hell. Stevie and I are friends, so I can say that. He's fantastic, and he's very active in the church. Stevie's an usher, sitting folks in the planters and in the Jack in the Box across the street. Sometimes he works the valet. He parked my Mercedes in the fountain last week.

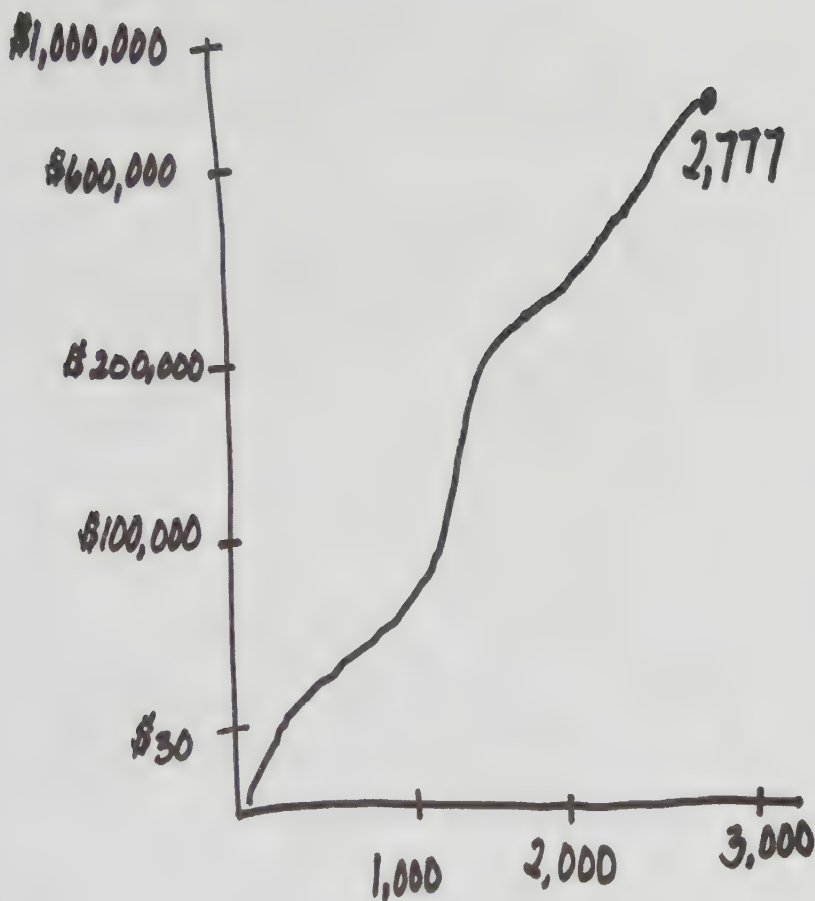


*Things found in offering  
plate at my insane church*



We've got some high rollers at this place. If you're ever in that area, stop by and visit. We built a beautiful new church there. Magic Johnson donated five million dollars. Denzel gave seven-point-five. I don't make as much money as they do, but I'm just as blessed. And when you're blessed, you've got to give back. So I pledged a million dollars. Sure did.

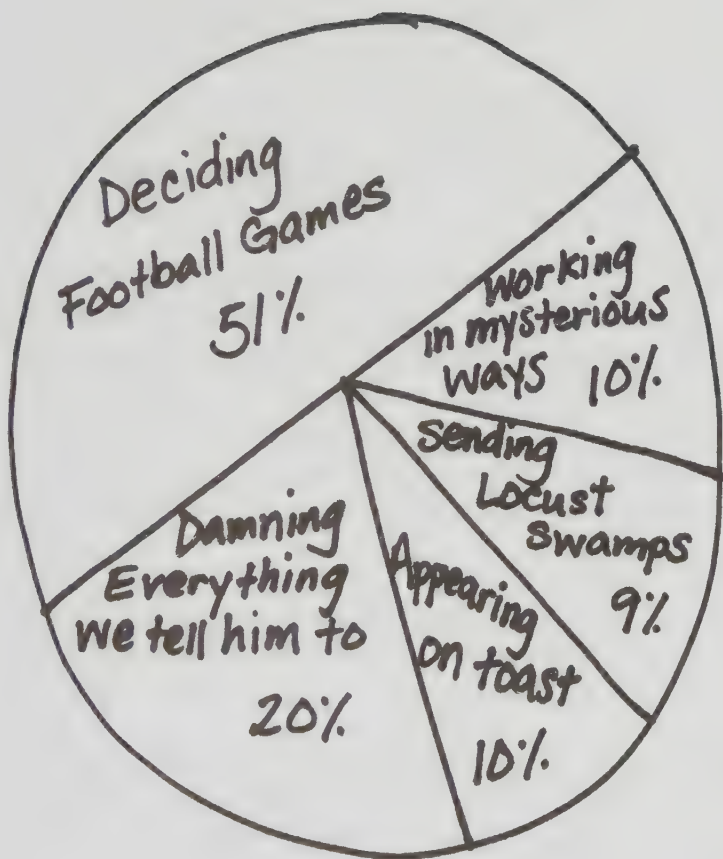
That's what I pledged, anyway. I might send it in, I might not. I could have pledged thirty million. It's going to be \$30 a week any way you slice it.



How long it will take to make  
good on my million dollar pledge  
in \$30 increments

But seriously, I throw some money into that offering plate. God has earned that tip, in my humble opinion. I'm not going to throw a ten-spot at the valet and not the Holy Ghost. God has helped me through tough times in my life and the lives of folks I know.

But I will say that some of y'all are taking his help a bit too literally. You can definitely ask for a little too much. God ain't going to hand you lottery numbers. He isn't going to yank that rotten tooth you've been ignoring. And he sure doesn't care who wins a football game.



How God spends  
his time

You see everyone giving credit to Jesus for touchdowns, but you never see Jesus getting the blame for an interception. “I threw the ball perfectly, till Jesus tipped it up in the air.” If he’s controlling the whole thing, why would he have made you fumble in the National Championship game? Did you do something to anger him, and he couldn’t wait till you got to the pearly gates to bring it up? Jesus had to get down to the Rose Bowl and slap that ball from your hands? The other team went to that evening service while you were playing Grand Theft Auto?

Is God launching tornadoes at schoolhouses? Is the Holy Spirit sending tsunamis toward Japan? Jesus send that swarm of killer bees up from Mexico? What happened to those bees? Remember when that report came out? Weren’t we all supposed to be swarmed to death by now? What’s this angry God stuff? God striking folks down? I don’t know that God at all. In my humble opinion, we need to stop with all of this hate.

There’s a whole lot of hating going on in His name, and I’m pretty sure that isn’t what he’s about. Everybody’s pointing fingers about who’s right and who’s wrong. That’s a little above our pay grades, in my opinion.

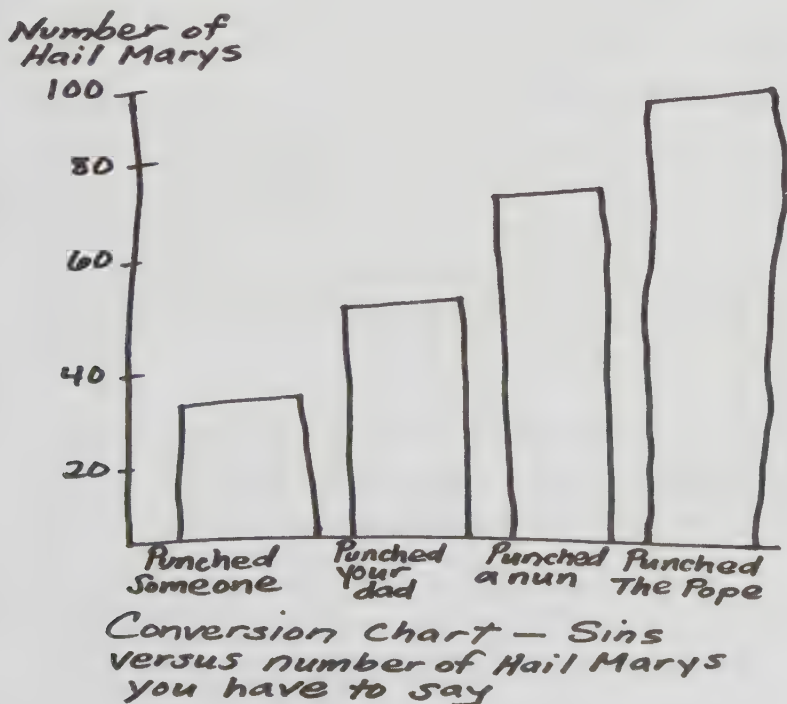
God forgives everybody. Heck, I already asked him to forgive my future sins. A lot of y’all aren’t smart enough to make that deal, but I be thinking. No matter what I do, I’ve got a hall pass from the man upstairs.

But I’ve seen just about enough of folks judging others in His name. How about you make sure your house is in order, then let the big man sort everything else out? Besides, I think there’s a little something to all of the religions out there.

## Catholics

Any Catholics reading this? Last year I sent the pope a Father's Day card. I can say that because I'm 75 percent Catholic. Y'all didn't know that? Yep, I've got my Rosey beads and I visit the congressional booth every week. I went to a Catholic school in San Francisco called Our Lady Used to Be Man. You ever see the pope in person, riding around in that big old bulletproof Barbie box? Looking like a ninety-seven-year-old Ken doll in those Prada shoes.

But seriously, I like how Catholics roll. You stumble into confessional, come clean about all the crazy things you did the night before. Then you count some beads, say a few Hail Marys, and head back to the pub. Done and done. It's like an oil change, but for sins.



## *Jews*

Any of my Jewish peeps in the house? I've been to Passover a few times with my friend Jerry. I asked for someone to pass over the pig's feet. I picked up a yarmulke to wear, but it had a little propeller on it. But seriously, they treated me right.

I love Jewish people. And they value an education, I can tell you that. Smart folks. Jewish babies read storybooks to their parents at three months. Once they're toddlers, they dive into the New York Times crossword. They do it in pen by kindergarten. Graduate law school in middle school. Simply amazing.

## *Muslims*

Every time you see Muslims on TV they're chanting and burning a blow-up doll. What is it they have against blow-up dolls? I can understand burning a flag, maybe. But that blow-up doll didn't do anything to you.

The media portrays these folks as angry and militant, but you know, a few bad garbanzo beans don't spoil the whole hummus. Muslims are good people. They have to leave for the airport twelve hours early so they can be detained five times and cavity searched for eighty minutes by the TSA.

## *Hindus*

Hindus really hedged their bets. They worship a lot of gods, just to keep their bases covered. Their deities have fourteen arms and elephant trunks on their faces. It's wild.

And they've got the craziest names. Saraswati. Lakshmi. Ganesha. Sounds like my family reunion. I have three nieces and an aunt named Ganesha.

But Hindus are good folks. Peaceful. Relaxed. They do all of that yoga and meditation. I tried yoga. The second I hit the mat I started snoring. I sit down for more than five minutes, I am fast asleep, so there's no way I'm going to lay down on one of those preschool naptime mats and stay awake.

But they stay relaxed. They need to. They work the two most stressful jobs in the world, getting robbed at the 7-Eleven and sitting in a cab during New York rush hour. You need some meditation if that's your nine-to-five. You'd better have Saraswati or Lakshmi riding shotgun, or you are going to have some serious road rage.

But seriously, those are stereotypes. Everyone knows that every Hindu in the world is now a computer programmer and makes no less than \$85,000 a year.

### ***Buddhists***

These are peace-loving folks too, meditating and wearing those robes around. I could use a few of those robes. Let my naughty bits breathe a little. That's why the Dalai Lama is so happy all the time.

Buddhists believe in karma. Everything you put out there comes back to you. I agree. You put out negativity and hate, that's what you get back. Same with positivity and love.

But it scares me when they talk about reincarnation.

You put out some of the wrong karma, you come back as an animal. That's why Buddhists are vegetarian. I'll tell you what: if they're right, I am coming back as a chicken for the next twenty lifetimes.

I have done more damage to my chicken karma than I care to say. I put it on bread. I put it on a skewer. I juice it and



drink it on ice. Chicken, chicken, chicken. I know I'm a stereotype, and I'll apologize for it just as soon as I get back from Popeye's. At least chicken is good for your eyesight. I can spot that KFC sign a mile away.

But I swear, when I'm dead and gone, if you drive past one of those big trailers full of chickens, and you see one trying to eat all the others? That'll be big George Wallace, reincarnated.

### ***A Billion Other Religions***

And there are a lot of other beliefs out there. Some of y'all are leaving teacups in the garden for fairies to drink. Some of you are wearing funny underwear and marrying eighteen people. No disrespect. All of you have something to say and something to add.

And you know what bottom line keeps appearing in all of the holy books?

*DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE OTHERS DO UNTO YOU. Matthew 7:12 (Christianity)*

*HURT NOT OTHERS IN WAYS THAT YOU YOURSELF WOULD FIND HURTFUL. Udana-Varga 5:18 (Buddhism)*

*THIS IS THE SUM OF DUTY. DO NOT TO OTHERS WHAT WOULD CAUSE PAIN IF DONE TO YOU. Mahabharata 5:1517 (Hinduism)*

*NONE OF YOU TRULY BELIEVES UNTIL HE WISHES FOR HIS BROTHER WHAT HE WISHES FOR HIMSELF. Number 13 of "Imam Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths" (Islam)*

*WHAT IS HATEFUL TO YOU, DO NOT TO YOUR FELLOW MAN. Talmud, Shabbat 31a (Judaism)*

Now that is what I would call a consensus. We all have differences. We don't agree about everything. But everyone knows The Golden Rule. We just seem to forget it constantly. If we all could embrace this one during our time on God's green Earth, there would be a lot less drama.

### ***Reverend George's Parting Words***

If you do one thing after reading this little ditty of mine, and I don't care if you worship a little green Martian who lives in your cookie jar, start treating others exactly how you'd like to be treated. Next time you're going to give someone the finger, give 'em a wave instead. Next time you're about to hurl an insult, imagine being on the other end of those words. Next time you're on the fence about visiting Grandma, remember what it feels like to be lonely.

*I can't help but think that's the way it should be.*

*I pray for you, you pray for me.*

*I love you, I need you to survive.*

*I won't harm you with words from my mouth.*

*I love you, I need you to survive.*

– from “I Need You to Survive” by Hezekiah Walker and the LRC



# **CHAPTER**

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**10**



## SOMETHING GOOD IS GONNA HAPPEN TO YOU

We've covered it all, haven't we? From midgets to Muhammad. From kids to koalas. From preachers to pyramids. Hopefully you've had as much fun reading as I've had writing. But once you set this book down, the question becomes "Now what?" I can't answer that. The Psychic Hotline is out of business. I've been calling for months. Miss Cleo won't tell me, either. We dated back in 2002, and it ended horribly.

So I've got to look at my own crystal balls to answer this question. One thing is coming through from beyond. One guaranteed prediction. Something good will happen to you.



*Percentage of you who  
will have something  
good happen*

Take a good look at that extremely well-made pie chart that took me several hours to complete. It is absolute fact. If life has got you down, you may have a hard time wrapping your head around the idea that there is light at the end of the tunnel. But you can trust me that it's a bona fide fact. Something good is going to happen to you, whether you like it or not.

Now, I'm not saying to sit there watching the paint dry till that good thing happens. People tend to make their own luck. I want you to help those good things meet you halfway.

### *Appreciate the Good Things You Have*

In order to be ready for good things, you must appreciate those you already have. I don't care if you live in a moldy-ass trailer in a swamp, there is a window that catches the evening breeze just right. There is a silver lining, wherever you may end up. When you start to practice identifying the things you are grateful for, it paves the way for you to discover more and more of them.

### *Be Ready for the Good Things to Come*

If you only expect bad news to come your way, you get in the practice of interpreting everything as bad news. I have friends who are like this. They've convinced themselves that the other shoe is going to drop at any moment. That becomes all they look out for. I promise that you'll miss a pile of good things doing that. Practice just the idea that something good is about to happen. Be open to it. Be ready for it. And now for the trickiest part.

### *Welcome Those Good Things*

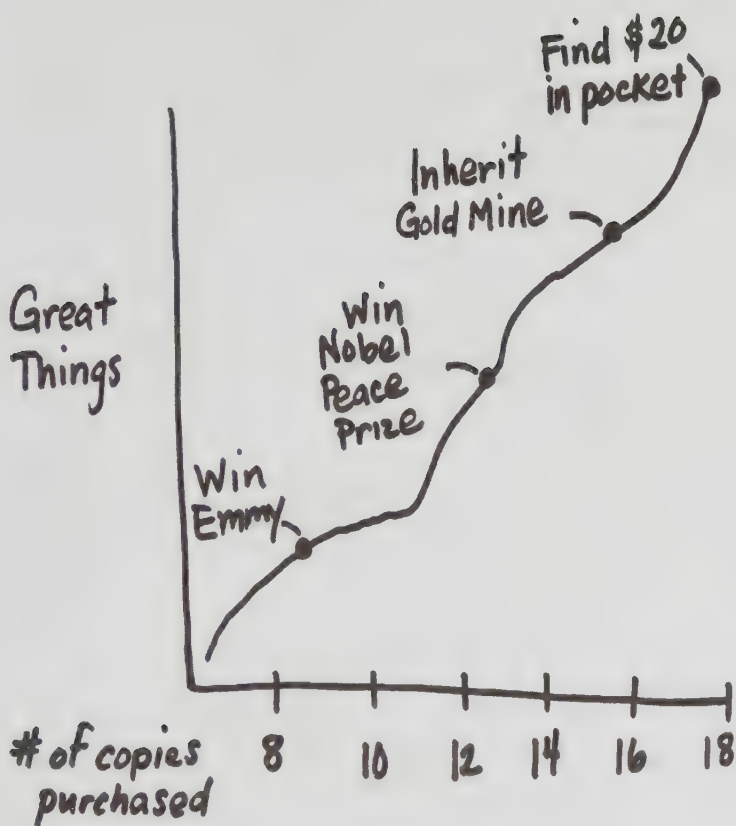
Just accept it. Something good is happening. Don't fight it. "No" is easy. "Yes" is harder. Believe or not, that person who



wants to help you out actually does. That brunch you've been invited to is going to be fun as hell. The eggs are going to be perfectly cooked, and the orange juice will be perfectly balanced between tartness and sweetness. Birds will fly through the window and sing on your shoulders while you do the dishes. Okay, so the last one is a stretch. The others are perfectly plausible.

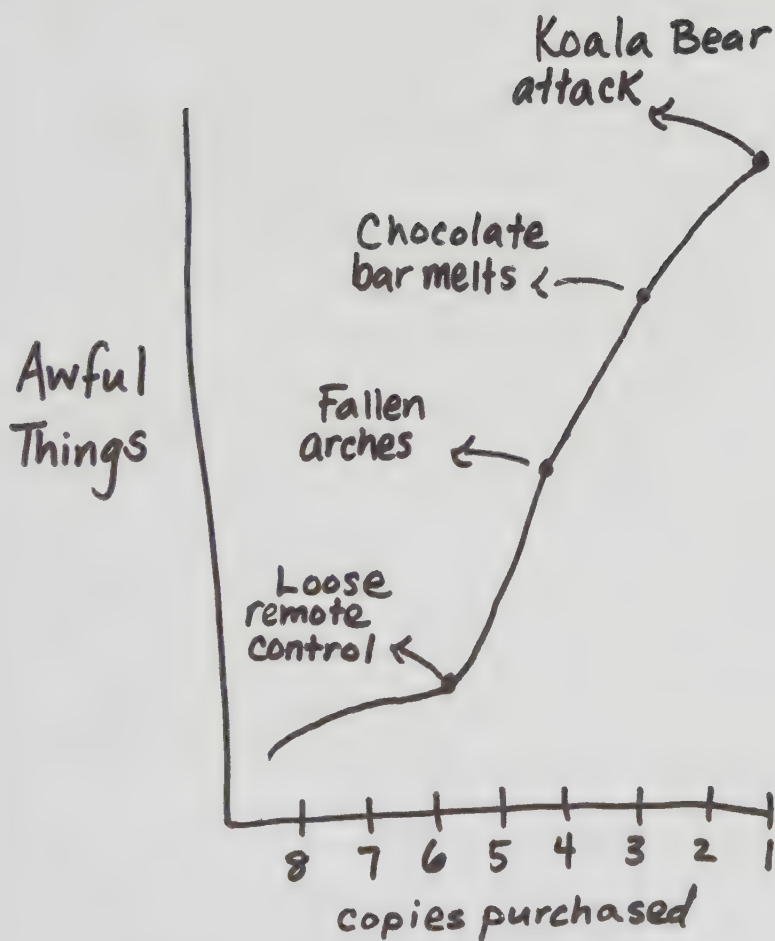
### *Other Tips Moving Forward*

Buy as many copies of this book as possible. This will ensure both your happiness and mine. I am not trying to scare you, but we've done a fair amount of market research in a few test cities. So far the impact of the book on both those who love it and those who shrug at it has been phenomenal.



Insanely great things that  
will happen if you purchase  
numerous quantities of this book

Now, unfortunately, due to forces beyond my control, the flip side has also proven true. The fewer the copies of this insanely helpful and humorous product you buy, the greater the likelihood of bad fortune befalling you. This is in no way a threat. This was a scientific study and not fabricated in any way. I am only reporting the results out of genuine concern and because I love you with all of my heart.



Awful Things happening  
to people who don't buy several  
copies of my book

I have warned you, so it isn't on my conscience now. Trust me, a koala bear attack is the worst kind of bear attack. If a grizzly gets you, it'll be over in seconds. They're about a thousand pounds and take down moose in twelve seconds flat. Imagine what they'd do to a 178-pound administrative assistant from Toledo.

But death by koala is long and agonizing. They move so slowly, and they take several breaks to chew on leaves and sleep. It gives you the illusion that you can run away, but if you try it they just jump back on your face and continue the slow, sleepy onslaught. It's even more horrific because you're being mauled by something so cute. I've had several friends go this way. It keeps me awake at night.

At any rate, you won't have to worry with that, because I'm certain that you will purchase the six or more copies necessary to avoid negative outcomes, as evidenced by our scientifically proven chart.

Don't keep these copies for yourself. Give them out. If you find this book to be a joy, then spread it. Let it be a gift that keeps on giving. Hell, give it to your enemies. They may need it more than anyone. Give it to a young person who's been straying. Give it to a sick friend. Five hundred ccs of humor and love, stat.

### ***Laughter Is Still the Best Medicine***

Sure, I don't want you to be maimed by a koala, but I also have your long-term care in mind. Laughter has been proven to do the following:

1. Lower your blood pressure (Laugh all day, eat deep-fried bacon-wrapped Twinkies for dinner.)

2. Work your stomach muscles (Can you say six pack?)
3. Boost your immune system (Note: Does not combat lactose intolerance.)
4. Release natural painkillers in the body (Put down that supersized oxycodone bottle for good!).
5. Reduce your stress level (Imagine, punching the wall a thing of the past!)

And the best part: laughter may be the only free medicine. It's a gift. It enriches our lives, and wonder of all wonders, it lengthens them too. Exercise that funny bone of yours as often as you can. Keep laughter in reach of children. Exceed the recommended dosage of smiles. If your giggling lasts more than four hours, call your physician and give him the prescription too.

But there is one way to absolutely ensure that you give that funny bone a two-hour workout. Instead of Cialis, see Wallace.

### ***Come and Find Me!***

George Wallace is easy to find. I'm like three black Waldos glued together, wearing an "I Be Thinkin'" cap. You can't miss me. There is nothing I love more than to get to meet folks and joke with them. I've been doing it my entire adult life, and I am going to do it even more going forward. If I'm not working it nightly in Sin City, I will be on the road.

I'll never stop working. My corpse will be telling jokes at my funeral. You're gonna hear a muffled "yo mama" joke as they lower my casket. I won't ever stop. I love life too much. I love people too much. Let's have some laughs together. Hopefully we just had a few while you read this. Hopefully we can

have some more fun face-to-face. Maybe we can poke some fun at each other and figure some things out about life along the way.

Until then, post these on your wall, on your refrigerator, and on your cubicle.

### *George's Ten Commandments*

\*Don't let your doctor get away with seeing you two hours after your appointment time.

\*Believe it's not butter.

\*Take a sick day, just because.

\*Don't get on Flight 50/50.

\*Don't walk directly behind old people.

\*Stop inventing reasons not to travel.

\*Don't say anything bad about postal workers.

\*Don't wear exploding underwear.

\*Always bring the bat when you charge the mound.

\*Don't eat anybody.

*But above all, remember this one thing: Life is funny.*

All of it. Funny. Making babies that are going to scream at you for the next eighteen years. Hating your boss while smiling to his face. Pretending you're not home when bill collectors call. Funny. Throwing out your back and limping around like you've been shot. Fat kids begging their parents not to make them go outside. Crashing funerals for the food. Funny.

With practice, you can do it. You can get there. You can train your eyes to always catch a glimmer of the lighter side. And no matter where you find yourself, no matter what life throws your way, you'll be able keep your chin up, take a deep breath . . .

## **AND LAFF IT OFF!**

P.S. I'm George Wallace, I love you, and there's absolutely nothing you can do about it.





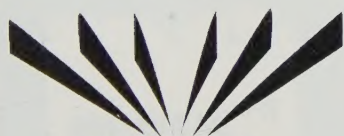
# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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GEORGE WALLACE is a comedian, actor and writer hailing from Atlanta, Georgia. For as long as he can remember he has enjoyed making people laugh, and for 35 years he's been honored to do so professionally. He has been named one of Comedy Central's top 100 standup comics of all time, and was recently honored for his lifetime achievements at the Soul Train Awards. George has spent a decade as a headliner at the world famous Flamingo in Las Vegas. Humor has served him well over the years, and he hopes to help others also live life with smiles on their faces.

DAN EWEN is a comedy writer and producer from Athens, Georgia. Dan has written jokes for several years, and has penned screenplays for various studios. Ewen is currently both scripting and producing the franchise reboot 'Son of Ernest'. He resides in Santa Monica, CA with his lovely wife and merciless twins.





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"George

he needs

- Joel Osteen

"Truly one of my favorite people." - Donny Osmond

"The ironman of comedy..." - Jay Leno

"George Wallace is my idol. George Wallace sells out everywhere.  
George Wallace kills every night." - Chris Rock



"I'm George Wallace, I love you, and  
there's absolutely nothing you can do  
about it."

Some people say that the stress of the "real world" is what stops the laughter from coming. When you grow up there are bills to pay. You've got to work a nine-to-five. You've got relationship troubles. But come on, people, you don't think a kid deals with stuff too? There's a bully on the playground, a math test the next day. Their teeth are falling out of their heads. Parents are yelling at 'em to eat their broccoli. Kids have their own problems, but they still find a way to laugh their pint-sized behinds off. So why can't the adults have some fun? Does it all have to be darned serious? Why can't we find the laughter in

I BELIEVE WE CAN.



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